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# **JOB CHARNOCK**

The Founder of Calcutta

*(In Facts & Fiction)*

**An Anthology**

*Compiled by*

**P. THANKAPPAN NAIR**

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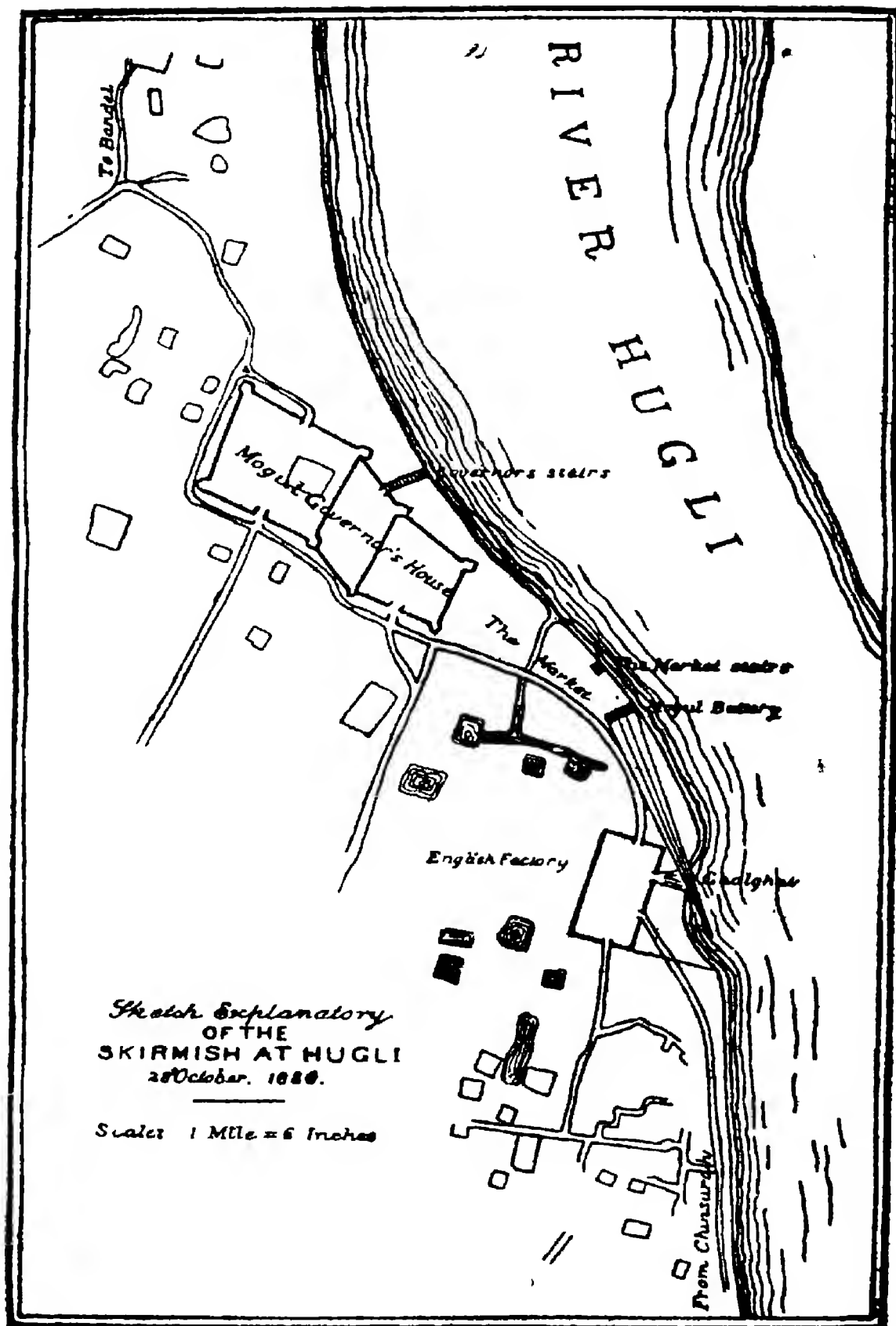


**JOB CHARNOCK ?**

A portrait of Job Charnock published in the  
*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, **15th edition.**

See page 41 for the authenticity of the picture





## **Preface**

Job Charnock, the founder of Calcutta, has not received the attention of historians he deserves. There are more myths about the father of Calcutta than facts which we know of. Neither a history of the life and times of Job Charnock, nor an authentic biographical sketch of the Father of Calcutta is available. In the absence of any treatise on Job Charnock, the only way to pay homage to the Founding Father of Calcutta is to collect all important writings on him and his times and publish them in an anthology. The present anthology is the first attempt to present the life and times of Job Charnock as seen by others. Important writings based on historical facts on Job Charnock are presented in Part I. His life and times as seen by fiction-writers are presented in Part II. The compiler of the anthology does not subscribe to the views of these fiction-writers. The gist of the compiler's own research on Job Charnock and his times is presented in his essay, 'Portrait of Job Charnock'.

The compiler is indebted to the India Office and Records for the supply of a photostat copy of Sir R.C. Temple's study, 'Job Charnock — His Parentage and Will'. The authorities of the India Office and Records have been very helpful, besides supplying other documents, in getting the compiler in touch with various other archives like the Guildhall Library, Lancashire Archives etc. in the United Kingdom. The compiler is indebted to Blackwoods & Sons Ltd., Edinburgh, for supplying him a photostat copy of Sir G.W. Forrest's article on Job

Charnock which appeared in the *Blackwood's Magazine* in June 1902. Some of the books and journals from which the essays included in this anthology have been supplied by Shri Mohammed Yakub, proprietor of the Calcutta Old Book Stall, Shri Indranath Majumdar of Subarnarekha, 72 Mahatma Gandhi Road, Calcutta, also supplied some journals.

There are repetitions galore in the anthology and the compiler could not help avoid them as the essays have been taken from different journals and books.

'A Portrait of Job Charnock' written by the compiler has been rendered into Bengali and is being published in the Bengali Journal, *Ekshan*. Prof. Nirmalya Acharya, the Editor of the Journal, deserves congratulations on the encouragement given to the compiler for writing the essay. Prof. Nishit Ranjan Ray, Curator and Secretary of the Victorial Memorial also deserves author's thanks for placing all available material, in his Museum, at the disposal of the compiler.

The compiler is indebted to Dr. Pratap Chandra Chunder, Education Minister of India, who granted permission to make free use of his Bengali novel, *Job Charnocker Bibi*. He not only threw his personal library open to the compiler for doing research on Job Charnock, but also offered valuable suggestions. The credit for translating the relevant portions from Dr. Chunder's novel as well as Shri Subodh Ghosh's short story goes to Shri Bijoli Bhusan Bhaduri of *Engineering Times News Weekly*. The compiler is indebted to Shri Subodh Ghosh for giving him permission to include the short story, 'Lila and Charnock', from his collection of *Kimbadantir Deshe*. Shri Bhaduri, offered valuable criticisms and placed at the compiler's disposal, translations of the most important writings on Job

Charnock that lie scattered in Bengali literature. Unfortunately, no contemporary account on Job Charnock in Bengali could be traced.

The photographs included in this anthology have been supplied by Shri P. N. Srivastava, industrial photographer, Calcutta.

The compiler is indebted to his uncles, Shri C. R. Bhaskaran Nair and Shri K. Madhavan Nair, for their help. The credit for kindling his interest on Job Charnock goes to Shri U. Raman.

Shri Mohammed Ayub Ansari is responsible for printing the anthology.

Shri E. H. Tippoo, Managing Director of Engineering Times Publications Private Ltd., has been kind enough to publish this anthology for which he deserves the compiler's thanks.

82/C Kansaripara Road

CALCUTTA-700025

July 1, 1977

P. T. Nair

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*Part—I*

**JOB CHARNOCK - IN FACTS**



# A PORTRAIT OF JOB CHARNOCK

By

**P. Thankappan Nair**

*It is customary with anyone who takes up his pen to write anything about Calcutta to begin with Charnock. We have noticed people writing about 'land-use' in Charnock's time, 'theatre' in Charnock's time etc. etc. with little knowledge about the founder of Calcutta and his days. Even a standard reference work like the *ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA* (14th and 15th editions<sup>1</sup>) does not devote more than a para or two on Job Charnock. The *DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY* does not say anything about Charnock's parentage, early life and other biographical details. Many a legend and myth has gathered around Charnock. It have become difficult to distinguish the truth about Charnock. An attempt is, therefore, made to give here an account of Charnock based on documents that have survived.*

Charnocks were a Lancashire family.<sup>2</sup> They were said to have assumed the local name of their dwelling place in Leyland Hundred in that county, and to have given them the distinguishing epithets of Charnock Richard, Heath Charnock and Charnock Gogard. These are all mentioned in the 13th century and the villages of Charnock Richard and Charnock Heath are still so called. A branch of the Charnock family settled in London and another in Hullcott, Bedfordshire, both in the 16th century, and Richard Charnock, father of the founder of Calcutta, was a London citizen and was the owner of the property in Bedfordshire. He was a scion of the Charnock family of Lancashire.

Richard Charnock, whose will<sup>3</sup> has come down to us, was a yeoman and solicitor. He bequeathed a legacy to Thomas Bateman in his will thus : "**Item.** I give unto Mr. Thomas Bateman Merchant sometymes servant to Mr. Michaell Marke-land the summe of six pounds of lawfull money of England



and unto James Hall Woolen draper in Candleweeke streete aforesaid the like summe of Six pounds of like money". The will continues :

"THE REST and residue of all and singuler my goods Chattells ready moneyes Plate Leases debts and other things whatsoever to me belonging and not before in these presents given and bequeathed I give and bequeath unto my said Two Sonnes Stephen Charnock and Job Charnock to be equally devided between them which said Stephen Charnock and Job Charnock my sonnes I DOE MAKE ordaine and appoint the full executors of this my present Testament and Last will."

Richard Charnock's will also specifically mentions that his son was abroad by stating, "That if my said sonne Job Charnock shall happen to depart this life before his returne to England...".

The will of Richard Charnock clearly establishes his relationship with Job Charnock. Additional proot has come from Job Charnock's letter to Henry Aldworth, written from Patna on October 12, 1663. Aldworth was then preparing to depart for England from Hooghly. Charnock and his superior at Patna Factoty, Ion Ken, expressed their hope to come down 'suddenly', but probably not in time to see Aldworth before he left. Aldworth was asked to take home letters to Charnock's father, and Bateman. Charnock writes :

"I know not whether I shall bee ready to goe home this yeare ; if not, God willing, the next I shall. Nay, perhappes I shall bee att home afore, because I intend still overland, and soe doth Mr. Ken".<sup>4</sup>

A postscript to this letter says that Aldworth will hear of the elder Charnock on inquiry to Mr. Hall, a haberdasher<sup>5</sup>

in Cannon Street.<sup>6</sup> Besides legatees, Thomas Bateman and James Hall were the executors of Richard Charnock's will. Since the will was dated April 2, 1663, it was probable Richard Charnock was dead at the time his son was penning the above letter. Probate was granted to Stephen Charnock on the 2nd June, 1665, power being reserved to issue the same to Job Charnock, the other executor, on his return to England. Aldworth<sup>7</sup> sailed for England in the *Royal Katherine*, but died during the voyage and, therefore, could not meet Richard Charnock.

After establishing the identity of Richard Charnock, let us trace Job Charnock's relationship with Stephen Charnock<sup>8</sup>, who was Chaplain to Henry Cromwell, son of Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland, in 1653-58. Stephen Charnock, the reputed Puritan theologian, was born in 1628 in the Parish of St. Catherine, Cree Church, London. Job Charnock bequeathed a legacy of £ 50 to the "poore of the Parish of Cree Church London" in his will<sup>9</sup>. This corroborates the fact that the theologian was Job Charnock's own brother. The absence of any allusion to Stephen's profession in Richard Charnock's will is accounted for in two ways: First, the chaplain had fallen into ill odour after the Protector's death and he remained in obscurity in London for fifteen years with no regular charge. Secondly, Richard Charnock was probably a Royalist and a High churchman and consequently would have had little sympathy with his son's puritanical views. Since the wills of Richard, Stephen and Job Charnock have come down to us and they all have some common elements, it is conclusively proved that Richard is Job's father and, Stephen, his brother.

Job Charnock was probably born in 1631, but this is not certain, as there is no mention of his age in his will, which is dated ninth day of January 1692 (93), a day before his death.<sup>10</sup> Since his brother Stephen was also dead (July 27, 1680), no legacy is reserved for any of his parents or brother. There is no mention of the name of the wife of Richard Charnock in his will; hence it is presumed that Job's mother had died before 1663.

We know nothing about the early life of Job Charnock in London. Perhaps, he was educated<sup>11</sup>, like his brother, at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. There is no doubt that he had a liberal education, for his surviving letters speak for themselves. His style was characterised by brevity and clarity of thought.<sup>12</sup>

Job Charnock reached India in 1656, but there is nothing on record to show that he was sent out to this country in the service of the London Company. Maurice Thom(p)son<sup>13</sup> had floated a company in 1655 when the United Stock was breaking up. At first he worked independently, but became the Governor of the resuscitated London East India Company when the United Stock finally broke up. Most of the factors recruited by Maurice Thomson were related to prominent ecclesiastics.<sup>14</sup> Job's colleague and executor in England, Daniel Sheldon<sup>15</sup>, was the nephew of Gilbert Sheldon, Archbishop of Canterbury. Ion Ken was elder brother of the celebrated bishop and Job Charnock, as we have already seen, was the brother of Stephen Charnock, the Puritan theologian. There is an oblique hint in one of the extant letters that Maurice Thomson was more interested in the spread of the Gospels than in the East India trade.<sup>16</sup>

## JOB CHARNOCK

There is no mention of the application of Job Charnock in the Court Minutes of the Committees. In fact, Job Charnock was the only factor who entered the service of the Company without executing any bond<sup>17</sup> and continued to serve in Bengal till 1680. Charnock's name is not found in any of the sailing lists of 1655, 1656 and 1657.<sup>18</sup> This fact shows that he was either an adventurer or a favourite of the 'Committees'. His name first appears on the nominal roll entered in the Court Books<sup>19</sup> under date 12-13th January 1657 (58) as Junior Member of the Council at Kasimbazar thus: "Job Charnock, Fourth (salary) 20 £".

The Court<sup>20</sup> wrote to "Our Agent and Factors'" on February 27, 1657 (58) that at "Hugly wee do appoint..... at Cassambazar (Ion Kenn, Chief at £ 40; Daniell Sheldon, 2d, at £ 30; John Priddy, 3d. at £ 30; Job Charnock, 4th at £ 20) .....". A letter from Balasore to Madras dated December 3, 1658, gives the actual arrangement as follows<sup>21</sup>; AT HUGHLI Hopkins, Rogers, Charnock, and Thomas Gifford.. ..... .

Thomas Hopkins, Ion Ken, Richard Chamberlain, Edmund Bugden and (probably) Job Charnock, who were sent out to Bengal by Maurice Thomson and associates were joined by William Blake, the Chief of the old Company at Hooghly. Thomas Billidge<sup>22</sup> had procured a separate *Nishan* from Shah Shuja, Viceroy of Bengal. Though the home authorities had appointed Charnock for Kasimbazar, he was retained at Hooghly by the Agent of Bengal factories, as we have seen above.

There is nothing on record to show that Job Charnock served at Kasimbazar<sup>23</sup> in 1657 or 1658. He was still at Balasore in August 1658 as is evident from Thomas Bateman's letter from Balasore which reads: "Your friend Mr. Ken is

not recovered but has every other day his wonted fits; and poor Job (Charnock) begins to droop and sympathise with Ion's sickness".<sup>24</sup> (Orthography modernised). After a short stay at Hooghly, Job Charnock proceeded to Patna and arrived, on his way, at Rajmahal on January 31, 1658 (59) and according to the letter of Henry Aldworth to Thomas Davies dated "Pro. febr. 1658 (59)", "Mr. Chamberlayne and Mr. Charnock are goeing tomorrow p. Pattana; Mr. Charnock for the quicker dispatch of his voyage is now cutting his haire, and intends to enter into the Moores fashion this day. I would have sent you one of his lockes too keepe for a antique but Mr. Chamberlayne hath promised to doe it .....".<sup>25</sup>

Thus, Charnock was the first Englishman to give up his elaborate wigs and cut his hair short and take up Indian dress. This won him the admiration of the people of Bengal (Bihar and Orissa included) From the very beginning, he identified himself with the habits of the native population.

The English factory at Patna was situated at 'Singee' (Singhiya), near Lalganj, 15 miles north of the city, on the left bank of the river Gandak. He reached Patna in February 1659 and spent the next twenty years there for supplying saltpetre to the Company. Chamberlain was the first head of the English factory at Patna and Ion Ken succeeded him. Charnock was appointed fifth in the order of seniority in the Bay of Bengal factories vide letter of October 7, 1662.

Charnock's original engagement seems to have been for five years as was the then customary practice. His memorial<sup>26</sup> to terminate his service at the end of the contracted period is dated February 23, 1663/4. Charnock who had taken a decision to return to England was persuaded by William Blake<sup>27</sup>, the newly appointed Chief of the Bengal factories, to

stay a little longer. He agreed to remain at Patna until the end of September 1664 vide his letter<sup>28</sup> dated February 23, on condition that he was made the head of Patna factory and he was, accordingly, appointed to that post since Ion Ken, whose contracted period of service had come to an end, had handed over charge to Thomas Stiles.

Charnock changed his mind and remained as the head of the Patna factory from 1664 to 1679. His change of mind may be attributed to the receipt of news of his father's death at home. Perhaps he did not find it worthwhile going home since his parents were dead and his only brother, Stephen, was spending his days in obscurity. Latimer<sup>29</sup> has conjectured the view that Charnock married in 1663. Had he married in that year, he would not have again decided to go home in 1670.

Charnock was discontented and wanted to resign his post in 1670. A consultation held at Hooghly on September 19, 1670 says :

“Job Charnock, Chief there (Patna) has writ us to leave the employment, returning his indentures and covenants unsigned, which wee suppose proceeds from a risentment of not being raised in employment according to his expectations and time of service...”<sup>30</sup>

Shem Bridges, who was then the Agent of the Bengal factories, requested Charnock to remain for at least a year, stating that, if he (Charnock) acquainted him with his desires, he would report them to the Company so that “a person of his abillities may not want their incouragement”.<sup>31</sup> Charnock's appointment as Chief at Patna<sup>32</sup> was confirmed by the Court of Committees in their despatch of December 1669. In 1671 (October 25) an order of the Court increased his salary to £ 40; and a month later he was informed that “in case he

continues in the Company's services, as they have had respect to him in the increase of his salary ... so they will further consider him as to his past services..."<sup>33</sup>. Charnock once again changed his mind though he refused to sign the indentures and covenants in 1672 as he wanted to return to England as soon as possible.<sup>34</sup>

The Chief and Council of Bengal in their letter of December 28, 1674 to the Company wrote that he (Charnock) 'doth manage their business (of saltpetre) as much to your advantage as any man can, and when anything happens contrary to your interest it lies (w) holy out of his way to amend it'.<sup>35</sup> That Sir William Langhorn, the Company's Agent at Fort St. George, to which the Bengal factories were subordinate, also had the same high regard for Charnock as the Bay council is shown by a recommendation he made to the home authorities about the Patna Chief. This was to the effect that if Walter Clavell went home (as he was reported to be intending) and Matthias Vincent succeeded him, as next in seniority, Charnock, though having a claim to the chiefship of Kasimbazar, should be retained at Patna, as 'your (salt) petre business being so important and so much needing him, who by all reports is the only person for that business'.<sup>36</sup>

The Court on December 24, 1675, in their despatch of that date, wrote to Fort St. George that "upon the commendation you give us of Mr. Job Charnock, we have resolved that for his encouragement, during his stay in our service at Patna to give him £ 20 per annum as gratuity"<sup>37</sup> (i.e. a personal allowance). Walter Clavell succeeded Shem Bridges in 1671 and Charnock was appointed to the Bay Council as Fifth and he attended the meetings<sup>38</sup> of the Council on December 17, 1676

and left Hooghly for Patna on February 1, 1677. Charnock was offered the fifth place at Fort St. George in 1678.

Charnock did not accept the position the Court offered him at Fort St. George as it did not meet with his expectations and probably as he was unwilling to quit Bengal.<sup>39</sup> The letter dated October 28, 1678 from the Patna Council addressed to the Court throws much light on this subject : "We have observed that your Worshipful Agent and Council of the Fort have inserted in a clause of their letter you sent us in yours, concerning Job Charnock, to which he replies that he is no ways yet satisfied, nor can he in the least conceive that the 5 of Council there belongs to him, and therefore desires their excuse for his not proceeding thither, he being not a little troubled to see such hard measure afforded him from thence, by depriving thus of the right to which he hath so many years since, and doth now at present belong to him, and therefore desires they would be pleased to take into further consideration being almost confident that his hon'ble employers will not suffer him to be thus neglected and unregarded about his 20 years' service in their employment, but afford him his right station".<sup>40</sup>

The Madras Council<sup>41</sup> appointed Charnock as Chief of Kasimbazar, the centre of the silk trade in Bengal, in place of (later Sir) Edward Littleton on July 12, 1679. He accepted the offer, but did not come down to take charge of the station, as he was busy in Patna, supervising the loading of the boats with saltpetre and other merchandise which were urgently needed by his employers. He wanted to see for himself that the native boats loaded with the Company's goods reach Balasore safe from the attack of pirates infesting the Hooghly river.<sup>42</sup>

Sir Streynsham Master, the Agent of the Company at Fort St. George, to which the Bay was subordinate as we have stated



earlier, visited the establishments in Bengal in 1679. Master left Madras on 1, 1679 and asked Charnock to meet him and his staff at Kasimbazar. He would not accept the excuses of Charnock and on December 15 wrote to him reprimanding for his delay in proceeding to meet the Agent at Kasimbazar. 'which factory is the greatest concern of the Hon'ble Company in these parts'. Master threatened Charnock with cancellation of his promotion order. But Charnock knew well that the Court would rather dismiss the whole of their other Agents if he were not appointed the Chief of Kasimbazar. After settling the Company's affairs in Patna, Charnock came down and took over the charge of the Kasimbazar factory on January 18, 1681.

Charnock had to put up with stiff opposition from the local people, who besieged him in his factory. He escaped and reached Hooghly safe. Master and the Court realised that a man of vast experience was needed at Hooghly and none other than Charnock, who had spent about 25 years in the Bay, was better suited to look after the interests of the Company in Bengal. The Company's business in Bengal increased every year. In 1668 the stock furnished for Bengal was valued at £34,000 but in 1675 its value rose to £65,000 and the factors were authorised to take up £ 20,000 in addition at interest. Charnock was offered the second position at Hooghly, eventually to succeed Matthias Vincent as the Chief. He became the Agent of the Company in Bengal on 16th or 17th April, 1686 after being superceded by (later Sir) William Hedges and John Beard, the Elder (1684-85).

The dispute between the English Company and Moghul authorities in Bengal over the issue of payment of custom duties to trade culminated in open hostilities on October 28, 1686.

The Directors had placed a force under Charnock's command in that year. Alarmed at the turn the affairs had taken, the Company's Agent sent for the troops that were quartered at Chandernagore. Charnock gained a decisive victory over the *Joujdar* of Hooghly with the help of troops commanded by Captain Arbuthnot. Shayista Khan, the Moghul Governor in Bengal, was impressed with the firing and battering of the English troops. He sought to effect an accommodation through the Dutch, but at the same time did not brook the rebuff. He was only looking for an opportunity to seize the Company's goods. Charnock had no other alternative but to make an open war with Shayista Khan. He burned and destroyed all the magazines of salt and granaries of rice. He is said to have burned the entire river face of the Hooghly as far as Chandernagore by a burning glass and sailed downstream by cutting with his sword a heavy iron chain which was stretched across the river for intercepting his vessel.

"Had there been no English conquest of Bengal, had there been no consequent introduction of Western culture and Western refinements of criticism, the Company's old Agent would by this time have been transformed into a warrior-hero as bold as the wielder of Durandal, as terrible in wrath as the avenger of Patroclus", says a historian about this skirmish at Hooghly.<sup>43</sup>

Sutanati, on the right bank of the Hooghly where a market for cotton used to spring up during the shipping season, was the place where Charnock halted. He stayed here for a short while and proceeded to Hijili where he had to bear the brunt of the attack of the 12,000-strong Moghul troops. The arrival of 70 men from Europe turned the tide. By an audacious strategem, Charnock magnified his reinforcement into a new army and delusive show of strength with banners,

trumpets, drums and loud huzzas. The Moghul general completely deceived, held back ; and on June 4, 1687, in compliance with an ultimatum served by Charnock, sent a flag of truce. The Moghuls were favourably impressed with the English prowess as Charnock, with his small contingent, had held the formidable Moghul forces at bay for months together.

The Emperor Aurangzeb, finding that his revenues were suffering from the hindrance to trade caused by the recent events, issued orders to the Nawab of Bengal to discontinue hostilities. The English were permitted to march out with all honours of war to their establishments in Bengal. They were also permitted to erect docks and magazines at Uluberia. Charnock was under no misconception as to the uselessness of the concessions made, and as soon as Shayista Khan's intentions were fully disclosed, he made up his mind to abandon Uluberia and take all the ships up the river to Sutanati.

He had, by this time, a clearer vision of what was really needed, and his skilled eyes fell on the geographical advantages offered by the little river-side village. The anchorage on the river at the point of Sutanati was good, The strategical advantages offered by Sutanati were not readily available at any other spot on the entire course of the river. This new haven of refuge was reached in September 1687 and a settlement of rude mud huts was formed, which was destined to become famous in history as the greatest of Indian cities. Charnock and his party remained at Sutanati for more than a year.

The Court of Directors, who had nursed the idea of annexing Chittagong, and transplanting the Bengal establishment there, sent Captain William Heath, "a hot-headed, capricious, and feather-brained skipper" to carry out their

fantastic plan. He, on his arrival at Sutanati, ordered the winding up of the establishments in Bengal without listening to the advice of Charnock and his Council. The English factors packed up bag and baggage, set sail downstream, reached Balasore and occupied it on November 29, 1688. Bahadur Khan, who succeeded Shayista Khan, was not willing to yield to the terms of Captain Heath. The captain and his party, therefore, proceeded to Chittagong at the close of the year to settle there. The tactless captain found it impossible to establish a colony at Chittagong on account of the opposition of the local king. Hence he weighed anchor on February 1689 and steered clear southwards, reaching Fort St. George on March 17, 1689.

The loss of revenue from the Company's trading operations in Bengal was considerable and Aurangzeb was anxious to get immunity to Moghul shipping. On April 23, 1690, the Emperor wrote to his Governor Ibrahim Khan, who had replaced Bahadur Khan, that "it has been the good fortune of the English to repent of their irregular past proceedings and their not being in their former greatness, have by their attorneys petitioned for their lives and pardon for their faults, which out of my extraordinary favour towards them, I have accordingly granted. Therefore, upon receipt here of my order you must not create them any further trouble, but let this order I expect you see strictly observed".

The Company was thus given royal permission to trade by the Emperor at an annual payment of Rs. 3,000 and the Agent, Charnock, had full faith in his old friend, Ibrahim Khan. After an enforced stay of some 15 months at Fort St. George, Charnock and his party set sail on board the *Princess* for Sutanati in July 1690. The party consisting of about 30 Englishmen

changed the *Princess* for the ketch *Madapollam* at Balasore and once more appeared before Sutanati on the Sunday noon of August 24, 1690.

A writer in the *Calcutta Review* imagines the arrival of Charnock<sup>44</sup> thus :

“ . . . On a sultry day of the year 1690, several boats stopped off the bank of the River Hugli, close to the dirty straggling village of Chuttanutti. One is a large budgerow (house-boat) with the English flag flying at her masthead. She is crowded with armed men both European and native, and the other boats are full of people. A somewhat portly-looking man stands on her deck, over whose head a chattah (umbrella) covered with scarlet cloth. He is dressed in a suit of half Flemish, half Spannish fashion. On his head is a broad-leafed Flemish beaver hat, with two feathers falling to the left side, from beneath which may be seen his long grey locks. He wears a short doublet of fawn-covered satin with a short, light cloak of tussa or country silk. Down his neck is a ruff and falling collar of lace. Round his waist he wears a broad buff belt, girt, with a massive gold buckle. From the belt hangs a long rapier, and the ornamented stocks of a pair of pistols are seen above the upper edge of the belt. His bushy eyebrows and grizzled moustaches, his quick remarks and abrupt tones give him an air of sternness as he is carried ashore, where a salaaming crowd receives him”.

The Sutanati Diary<sup>45</sup> records the event thus :

“August 24th (Sunday). This day at Sankral ordered Captain Brooke to come up with his vessel to Chuttanutte where we arrived at noon ; but found the place in

a deplorable condition, nothing being left for our present accommodation and the rain following day and night. We are forced to betake ourselves to boats, which considering the season of the year, is unhealthy; Mellick Barcoodar and the country people at our leaving this place (in October 1688) burning and carrying away what they could. On our arrival here the Governor of Tana sent his servant with a compliment”.

Within four days of his arrival, Charnock took the necessary steps to build a warehouse and other buildings, as is evident from the consultation <sup>46</sup> dated Thursday, August 28 at which besides the Agent, his councillors, Francis Ellis and Jeremiah Peachie, were present. They “Resolved that a letter be sent to Mr. Stanley etc. to come from Hugli and bring with them what Englishmen are there, that the war with the French may be proclaimed, and also that Commissions be given to all commanders of ship in order to the prosecution of the same.

“In consideration that all the former buildings here are destroyed, it is resolved that such places be built as necessity requires and as cheap as possible, viz—

(1) A warehouse, (2) a dining room, (3) the Secretary’s office to be repaired, (4) a room to sort cloth in, (5) a cook room with its conveniences, (6) an apartment for the companys servants, (7) the Agent’s and Mr. Peachie’s houses to be repaired, which were part standing, and a house to be built for Mr. Ellis, the latter being totally demolished, (8) the guard house.

“These to be done with mud walls and thatched till we can get ground whereupon to Build a factory.

Thus originated Calcutta, the laying of the foundation of which marked the British ascendancy in India. Till then the British were struggling for a footing in the guise of humble traders.

### IS CALCUTTA 'CHANCE--ERECTED' ?

There are few cities in the Orient which can claim to be the product of the imagination of one man alone, as that of Calcutta. There are no two opinions that Calcutta is not the product of the vision of Job Charnock. Since the sailing of the sloop *Transport*<sup>17</sup> on February 25, 1651 under the command of William Bevis and his mate George Becher, a number of Englishmen had sailed up the Hooghly under the Union Jack ; but none had felt the necessity of a fortified settlement for the protection of English trade. It was left to Job Charnock to transplant the greatness of Great Britain in India.

It is not correct to say that the site of Calcutta was selected from the mid-day halt of the "Worshipful Agent" and the city spread like fungus. Neither was the city 'chance-directed', nor was it 'chance-erected, laid and built, on the silt'.<sup>18</sup> Charnock selected the site of Calcutta from his long experience of the Hooghly for more than three decades. He made several attempts at establishing a port and city. He had made experiment with Hijili and Uluberia further downstream and stayed at Sutanati twice before selecting it as the site of future Calcutta. The spot chosen was the highest point at which the river was navigable for sea-going vessels. We have already noted the geographical advantages of Sutanati Charnock had foreseen.

The Court of Committees of the London Company had issued instructions to their East-Indiamen Captains "to take

notice of the channel and depth of the river Ganges and the entrance thereinto, to keep a journal and to make exact drafts of their depths, reaches and currents and also how the sands usually vary",<sup>49</sup> as early as 1667.

Charnock was the first Englishman to foresee the advantages of a river port. The site selected was Sutanati, the embryo of modern Calcutta. This place was secure for a naval power as other places where he had stayed such as Hijili, Uluberia, Hooghly etc. were not dependable. The Moghul forces had to cross the river higher up to attack Sutanati and march down upon it from the north. The attacking force was exposed to swift and certain destruction if the river were crossed while the English troops guarded it. The English could assail the enemy on his march to Sutanati by cutting off his line of communication and thus place him in a dangerous predicament. The Salt Lakes in the east and the swamps and marshes surrounding it made it invulnerable to the enemy. Moreover, Sutanati had easy communication with the factories in Orissa, Bengal and Bihar. It is incorrect to say that Job Charnock did not understand all these advantages.<sup>50</sup> Otherwise, how could have Calcutta retained its position as the foremost port of India so far?

"The capital of British India did not, as some seem to think, spring up like Jona's gourd, in a single night...<sup>51</sup> The fact remains that Charnock and Charnock alone founded Calcutta. Many of his contemporaries failed to see the need of such a measure (a fortified settlement to safeguard the trade and commerce); others saw it, but the Court would not trust them, or give the necessary means. In Charnock the Court reposed an almost unwavering confidence. He wished to make a fortified settlement at Sutanati and made it... He will always occupy a place



among those who have the sovereign honour\* of being the founders of States and Commonwealths"... says a historian.

The Court of Committees of the "Governor and Company of Merchants of London, trading into the East Indies", were also favourably impressed with the strategical position of Sutanati. "We think the sooner the Agent Charnock resettles the factories of Cossimbazar and Malda, the better it will be for the Company, and since he likes Chuttanuttee so well we are content he should build a factory there with as much frugality as may be.... He (Charnock) may find it necessary to continue a small factory at Hugli likewise, but that we must leave to his and council's discretion...",<sup>52</sup> wrote the Court on February 15, 1689. Again on September 11, 1689 the Committees wrote to Fort St. George: "If the Moors will allow us to fortify ourselves at Chuttanuttee where our ships may go up and ride within the command of our guns, it would be much better for us though it should cost us a bribe of thirty or forty thousand rupees to the great men to be paid when we are possessed of the Moghul's *firman*".<sup>53</sup>

It is clear from what we have stated above that Kipling was wrong in thinking that the city of Calcutta was a 'chance-erected' one from the mid-day halt of the Agent.

### CHARACTER OF CHARNOCK

Job Charnock was perhaps the only servant of the London Company who was above criticism. There was not a single head of English factories in India, who was not either disgraced by dismissal or condemned at home by the Court of Committees. According to Bruce's *Annals* <sup>54</sup> (Vol. II, pp 449-50) Charnock had kept in check the measures of this Agent (Sir Streynsham

Master) and Council by correspondence with the Court (of Committees); and the Company declared that "they would rather dismiss the whole of their Agents than that Mr. Charnock should not be the Chief of Cossimbazar".

Charnock's conduct was unimpeachable throughout his long period of service extending over three decades and a half. He justified the trust reposed in him by the Court. He is referred to as 'one of our most ancient and best servants',<sup>55</sup> 'as one of whose fidelity and care in our service we have had long and great experience',<sup>56</sup> 'a person that has served us faithfully above twenty years and hath never, as we understand, been a prowler for himself beyond what was just and modest'<sup>57</sup> etc. etc. The Court learnt the death of their 'good Agent Mr. Charnock' from Captain Knox, "for which we are sorry, but we must all submit to God's will".<sup>58</sup>

Even the bitterest critics of Charnock knew full well that he never wronged the Company in the price of their goods. Every one knew that without clear proof of his wronging the Company, he could not be displaced. "The experience we have of Mr. Charnock for 34 years past, and finding all that hate us to be enemies to him, having wrought such a confidence in our mind concerning him that we shall not, upon any ordinary suggestions against him, change our ancient and constant opinion of his fidelity to our interests",<sup>59</sup> wrote the Court. The Committees did not tolerate the sprouting of factions against "our Agent whom since we dare trust in the head of our business in Bengal, we are resolved to trust him thoroughly."<sup>60</sup>

The Court of Committees had given Charnock extraordinary powers "because we are abundantly satisfied and given him ample power and authority that he may with or without the

advice or consent of his Council place or displace any of his Council of Bengal, or any other of our servants there at his discretion, without giving any reason to his so doing to any but ourselves, which is an authority we have not formerly given to any Agent in Bengal".<sup>61</sup> This power of attorney given to him a year later (1693) was too late for its effective utilisation. "We have given and do give such an absolute authority to Mr. Job Charnock during his life or until our further order, that he may right us and himself upon any negligent or unfaithful servants in a summary way",<sup>62</sup> wrote the Court.

The only occasion on which the Court censured his conduct was the skirmish at Hooghly. The language used on this occasion is this: "We see no cause to find fault with Mr. Charnock's sincerity to our interest, and only wish he were as good a soldier as he is [for ought we see, by long experience of him] a very honest merchant"....<sup>63</sup> He was not answerable to the abortive expedition to Chittagong.

His uncompromising character was responsible for Charnock's failure to earn the goodwill of his superiors on the spot and the confidence of his own staff. "He would not stir a finger to secure the goodwill of his fellowmen, nor even take the trouble to show his best side to the Directors. They recognised his worth and called him honest, for he was one of the very few who abstained from private trade, and after thirty-eight years in their service died a comparatively poor man", says a historian.<sup>64</sup>

The confidence Job Charnock enjoyed from the Court of Committees and their estimate of him are at variance with the accounts left of him by his superiors on the spot. He had to cross swords with all his superiors in India, none of whom

escaped the wrath of the Court. Sir Streynsham Master, Matthias Vincent, William Hedges, Captain Heath and others who opposed Charnock were all disgraced by the Court. He disobeyed the orders of his superiors in India with impunity, if they were against the interests of his employers.

There had been few Englishmen who had so interested themselves in the social, cultural and political affairs of India, as did Job Charnock in the 17th century. He knew Bengal and Bihar by heart. He was the first Englishman to detect the decay of Aurangzeb's empire. One of his letters to the Bay Council says: "...the whole kingdom lying in a very miserable feeble condition, the great ones plundering and robbing the feebler, and no order nor method of Government amongst them. The king's hookim (*hookum*) is of as small value as an ordinary Governor's".<sup>65</sup> He says elsewhere: "...Had it been another King, as Shah Jahan, whose phirmand<sup>66</sup> and Hasbullhookims<sup>67</sup> were of such great force and binding that none dare to offer to make the least exception against any of them, it might have seemed somewhat reasonable; but with this King Oramshaw it is contrary, none of which in the least (carry ?) fear with the people, all his Governors making small accompt thereof".<sup>68</sup> Who would have thought of Aurangzeb's authority in 1678 so lightly ?

Patna was the gateway to Bengal during the Moghul days and Charnock's stay at Singhiya enabled him to gather all political intelligence, which he passed on to the authorities in India, who in their turn, transmitted the news to the Court of Directors. He knew the weakness of the Moghul officials and bribed them liberally to further the interests of the Company. He had easy access to the Nawab of Bihar from whom he learnt the political developments in the Moghul empire.

Charnock was also instrumental in hushing up the Junk affair of Mir Jumla in the early stages. He was present at the crucial negotiations with Mir Jumla on some occasions.<sup>69</sup> But for his sagacity, the nascent English trade in Bengal would have been written off.

His knowledge of the Persian was the greatest asset to the London Company. His 'Moore's fashion' also won him the respect of the Moghul officials on the spot. Thomas Bowrey,<sup>70</sup> the sailing master of repute, who visited Bengal on three different occasions and lived in these parts for quite a long time, has this much to say about Job Charnock :

"The English Chief (by name) Job Charnock hath lived here (Patna) many years and hath learned the Persian (or Court) Languages as perfect as any Persian borne and bread ; and hath lived wholly after their custome [save in his Religion], by which he hath obtain'd vast priviledges, and the love of the Grandees that Sway the Power of the Kingdome, and is dayly admitted into the Nabob's presence".

John Marshall,<sup>71</sup> who may be considered the first Indologist, was one of the subordinates of Job Charnock in Patna from 1670 to 1672. He arrived in India on September 11, 1668 and died at Balasore on August 31, 1677. His study of Indian antiquities and Sanskrit literature was entirely due to the inspiration he received from Job Charnock. He has always taken Charnock as an authority on various Indian subjects and quotes his views in his manuscript notes. Marshall has quoted the views of Charnock on Indian Astronomy. He has reproduced the place of the planets according to Charnock's scheme. Charnock took a lively interest in the customs and manners of the people.

Most of the historians have painted Charnock as an imperfectly educated, coarse and wilful, strong man, who spent most of his life in almost isolated positions among natives and was tinged with native thoughts, habits and action. According to one, he represented a block of rough-hewn British man-hood. He was not at all a beautiful personage, perhaps for the founders of England's greatness in India were not such as wear soft raiment and dwell in king's houses, but a man who had a great and hard task to do and who did it with small thought of self and with a resolute courage which no danger could daunt, nor any difficulties turn aside.<sup>72</sup>

### CHARNOCK'S NATIVE WIFE

There is only one reference in the East India Company's records about Job Charnock's wife and no allusion has been made of this native lady in any of the surviving private letters. He is perhaps the only Englishman whose name was not associated with any scandal.<sup>73</sup> Before we attack the views of Hedges and Alexander Hamilton, let us view the matter dispassionately.

The absence of Charnock's wife's name in any of the official correspondence or in his will or in the baptismal register of his daughters is construed as an evidence that the lady must have been a native. The absence of Charnock's wife's name in his will can be easily explained from the fact that she was dead by 1692. Hamilton's gossip about the *Sati* took deep root as nobody ever cared to judge the worth of the statements of this adventurer before Sir Henry Yule.

There is some ground to suggest that Charnock's wife commanded respect from the English society at home and in

Calcutta, as there was no stigma attached to his daughters and they found respectable Englishmen in the Company's service as their husbands. Mary, eldest daughter of Charnock, was the wife of Charles Eyre, who succeeded the founder. Catherine was the wife of Jonathan White, who was Secretary to the Bengal Council. Elizabeth married William Bowridge (who died in 1724), who was a senior merchant. The regular correspondence<sup>74</sup> Mrs. Eyres and Mrs. White maintained with the elite of the English society in London is an indication that they enjoyed good social status.

The Company's factors were not allowed to bring their wives to India during the first few decades of the establishment of the Bengal factories as there was no provision for married accommodation and English ladies were unable to withstand the rigours of six months of sea voyage in those days. Consequently, there were few English ladies in Bengal till the foundation of Calcutta. At Fort St. George, Andrew Cogan, Agent Henry Greenhill and Sir Thomas Chamber, and Edward Winter at Balasore, had found wives among the Portuguese inhabitants.<sup>75</sup> Ralph Cartwright,<sup>76</sup> who extended the Company's commerce from Masulipatnam to Hariharpur in Orissa in 1633, was detected in an intrigue with the wife of a Muhammedan dwelling next door to the English house at the latter place. Gabriel Boughton<sup>77</sup> who got Shah Shuja's *Nishan* for bringing the English from Hariharpur to Hooghly, was married to a 'Mogullana'. Boughton's widow next married William Pitt, an interloper. She was remarried by Richard Moseley. Richard Edwards,<sup>78</sup> and a few others had either native wives or formed liaison with them. Since this was the custom among the Englishmen of the day, and there is no mention of any lady's name who arrived in Bengal as the wife of Job

Charnock from 1666 to 1678, we must concede that he must have had a native wife. Since Katherine, youngest daughter of Job Charnock, died aged 19 on January 21, 1701, she must have been born in 1682. Charnock must have married the native lady before or in 1678 as Katherine had two elder sisters. We must allow a period of 18 months for the spacing of children.

Let us now see what William Hedges has to say about Charnock's native wife. Hedges was at Dacca from October 25, 1682 to December 15, 1682. While he was at Dacca, he notes in his Diary under date

“Dec. 1 (1682). I sent James Price to Ray Nundell's. This morning A Gentoo sent by Bulchund, Governor of Hugly and Cassumbazar, made complaint to me that Mr. Charnock did shamefully, to ye great scandall of our Nation, keep a Gentoo woman of his kindred, which he has had these 19 years; and that, if I would not cause him to turn her away, he would lament of it to the Nabob, which, to avoid further scandall to our Nation, with fair words I prevailed with ye poor fellow to be pacified for ye present.

“I was further informed, by this and divers other persons, that when Mr. Charnock lived at Pattana, upon complaint made to ye Nabob that he kept a Gentoo's Wife [her husband being still living, or but lately dead], who was run away from her husband and stolen all his money and jewels to a great value, the said Nabob sent 12 Souldiers to seize Mr. Charnock; but he escaping [or bribing ye men] they took his Vekeel and kept him 2 months in prison, ye Souldiers lying all this while at ye Factory gate, till Mr. Charnock compounded the business for Rupees 3000 in money, 5 Pieces of Broad Cloth, and some swordblades.



Such troubles as these he has had divers times at Cassumbazar, as I am credibly informed; and whenever she or Mr. Charnock dyes, ye pretence will certainly lye heavy on ye Company".<sup>79</sup>

Hedges' visit to Dacca is corroborated by the Dacca Diaries.<sup>80</sup> According to Dacca Diaries, "the Rt. Worpll the Agent etc. Councill arrived here this morning" on October 25, 1682. Though Charnock was one of the Council of Hedges, both of them were at loggerheads since the day of the arrival of the Agent. Hedges himself notes in his diary :

"July 20 (1683)... Continuing my discourse with the said Mr. Harding, I desired to know the reason why Mr. Charnock was so cross to me, and thwarting every thing, I proposed or did for the Hon'ble Company's service? who replied, 'Mr. Charnock had no other reason for his so doing, but that he looked upon himself as disoblged by you at your first arrival, for not turning out Mr. Catchpoole at his request, and was thereupon resolved to blast and frustrate all your actions and proceedings as much as he could, and never to counsel or assist you more as long as he lived'.<sup>81</sup> (Orthography modernised).

It is to be remembered that Hedges kept the diary to vindicate his own actions rather than to record the day-to-day business affairs of the Company. Even though he was one of the "Committees", he was dismissed by the Court vide their despatch of December 21, 1683 for opening and detaining a letter from John Beard to Sir Josiah Child, the Governor of the Company. Since Hedges was a sworn enemy of Charnock, we cannot give any credence to his stories. He entered these malicious gossips about Charnock in his Diary in order to

discredit the 'ancient servant' of the Company. Moreover, Hedges contradicts himself by giving two irreconcilable stories by one and the same person. We should leave out the hyperboles and concur with Hedges that Charnock had a native wife.

Captain Alexander Hamilton,<sup>82</sup> whose reminiscences extend over five and thirty years, was a master of gossip. The historical value of his *New Account of the East Indies* must, however, be weighted with his distinct confession that '*these observations have been mostly from the store house of my memory and are the amusements or lucubrations of the nights of two winters*' and again, that "*If I had thought while I was in India of making my observations or remarks public and to have had the honour of presenting them to so noble a patron*"—as the Duke of Hamilton, to whom the work is dedicated—"*I had certainly been more careful and curious in my collections, and of keeping memorandums to have made the work more complete*".<sup>83</sup>

The interloping Captain, Hamilton, has never said a good word for anyone if he could help it and had a most powerful treasury of scandals at his command. The Company's records are all extant during the stay of this adventurer and most of his statements have been contradicted by official records. Let us reproduce what he has to say, about Charnock, as it is a good fiction for reading.<sup>84</sup>

+ ..Mr. CHANNOCK choosing the Ground of the colony, where it now is, reigned more absolutely than a *Rajah*, only he wanted much of their Humanity, for when any poor ignorant Native transgressed his Laws, they were sure to undergo a severe whipping for a Penalty, and the Execution was generally done when he was at Dinner, so near his Dining-room that the Groans and Cries of the poor Delinquents served him for Music.

“ The Country about being overspread with *Paganism*, the Custom of Wives burning with their Deceased Husbands is also practised here. Before the *Mogul's* war, Mr. CHARNOCK went one time with his ordinary guard of Soldiers, to see a young Widow act that tragical Catastrophe, but he was so smitten with the Widow's Beauty, that he sent his Guards to take her by Force from her Executioners, and conducted her to his own Lodgings. They lived lovingly many Years, and had several Children ; at length she died, after he had settled in CALCUTTA, but instead of converting her to *Christianity*, she made him a Proselyte to Paganism, and the only part of Christianity that was remarkable in him, was burying her decently, and he built a Tomb over her, where all his Life after her Death he kept the anniversary Day of her Death by sacrificing a Cock on her Tomb, after the *Pagan* Manner ; this was and is the common Report, and I have been credibly informed, both by *Christians* and *Pagans* who lived at CALCUTTA under his Agency, that the Story was really Matter of Fact.”

No doubt, Hamilton's story of the Hindu widow is probably another version of the more scandalous one recorded by Hedges. We should thank Hamilton for making Job Charnock rescue a Brahmin widow from committing *sati* and living with her for his whole life, without committing adultery or bigamy.

The writings of William Hedges and Captain Alexander Hamilton have influenced generations of Englishmen and Indians alike. Even historians have not hesitated to take Hamilton's gossip as their gospels. Though Hedges' statements are more damaging than that of Hamilton, very few have been influenced by them. Since Hamilton's book has served as a vade-mecum on India for the past three centuries and a half, it

is difficult to dislodge the prejudice he has generated against Charnock among the readers of historical treatises.

The only reference in the Company's records<sup>86</sup> about Charnock's wife comes in an altogether different context and there is no malice or rancour attached to it.

From an imperfect letter, dated "Hugly, the 16th Nov. 1600 (1700)" to the Court of the English Company, Sir Edward Littleton and his Council at Calcutta, replying among manifold subjects, to certain remarks or orders of the Court regarding marriages with natives, wrote :

" ...taking JENTUES meets often into great trouble alsoe, tho' but very poor people having all of them Husbands very early, who tho' they cohabit not, yet on such oacasion apply to the Government where its never ended but with great charge and trouble. As in the Case of Mr. JOB CHARNOCK and the Woman hee kept tho' of a meane Cast, and great poverty, which occasioned Great trouble and Charge to the Company a long while at PATTANA, and afterwards some alsoe at CASSIMBUSSAR....."

Edward Littleton was nominated Factor on October 13, 1670, and arrived in India in 1671, and was in 1679 Chief of Kasimbazar factory. He was one of the Directors of the New or English East India Company and proceeded in 1699 to Bengal as President of the Bay factories. Littleton had no particular reason to malign the character of the Founder of Calcutta and in fact knew Charnock well as he was in Kasimbazar for a long time. As his statement about Charnock's native wife comes out spontaneously, without meaning any offence to the departed soul, we should accept it with all the respect it deserves.

Sir Edward Littleton's statement demolishes Hamilton's myth of *Sati* and Hedges' imputation of Charnock's living in adultery. Our own conclusion is that Job Charnock had married an Indian lady, who was not of high caste, in the year 1678 or a little earlier and they led a contended conjugal life. Though Moorehouse<sup>86</sup> and Doig<sup>87</sup> have given Charnock's wife a name—Maria—on their own authority, let us remember that they are journalists and they have such freedoms. Bengali fiction writers like Dr. Pratap Chunder Chunder<sup>88</sup> and Mr. Subodh Ghose<sup>89</sup> have also given Mrs. Charnock their own names—Angela and Lila—indeed beautiful names. Since we have neither the freedom of journalists nor the imagination of fiction writers, let the lady remain anonymous till we come across any official record.

### CHARNOCK AND PAGANISM

Before examining the charge of Paganism ascribed by Hamilton to Charnock, let us remember that the founder of Calcutta was a person who was guided by strong moral sense throughout his dealings with the people of Bengal and Bihar. He must have abhorred the ghastly custom of self-immolation of widows at the funeral pyre of their late husbands. To marry a *Sati* and live with her for the rest of her life is no mean an achievement since there was possibility of endangering one's life and property. Perhaps Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar owes a deep debt of gratitude to Job Charnock for his supposed magnanimity, if we give credence to Hamilton. Whatever may be the fact, his nobility of mind did not allow him to convert his Indian wife to Christianity. Instead, she made him a proselyte to 'Paganism' according to Hamilton. Since Dr. Wise<sup>90</sup> has dealt with the worship of Five Saints, for which the sacrifice of cocks is an adjunct, we shall not make any digression here.

Paganism was not Charnock's creed, as is alleged by Hamilton. We have already quoted the testimony of Master Thomas Bowrey. Charnock's faith in Christianity was unshaken, though he professed religious toleration. During his stay in Madras from March 17, 1689 to July 1690, he took opportunity to baptise his three daughters, Mary, Elizabeth and Katherine. The entry in the baptismal register of St. Mary's Church ( Madras ) reads : "August 19th, 1689. Charnock, Mary, Elizabeth and Katherine, daughters of Job Charnock, baptised by J. Evans. Francis Ellis, Godfather, Ann Seaton and Margery Heathfield, Godmothers<sup>91</sup>". This entry in the church records absolves Charnock of the imputation of heathenism and is an incontrovertible proof that he remained a Christian throughout his life<sup>92</sup>. The omission of the name of the mother is significant. It shows that Charnock was never legally married to his Hindu wife. She was alive during his skirmish with the Moghul *faujdar* at Hooghly. Neither the name of this virtuous lady, nor her pedigree has come down to the posterity.

The allegation that Charnock was cruel in dealing with his servants and natives is also baseless. He was a disciplinarian and could not tolerate chicanery. Yule says : "That Job was too apt to use the whip is, we fear to be traced even now under his own hands, but it does not follow that he delighted to feast his ears with the cries of the delinquents. (In a letter from the Council at Hugli to that at Balasore dated June 3, 1686, there is a postscript which Yule takes to be in Charnock's own writing : "If the peons come in five days, give them 4 annas buxees ; if they stay longer chawbuck, and for the future the hour when dispeeded is in the backside, we expect the same from you<sup>93</sup>").

We must remember that Charnock's postscript just quoted above by Yule was penned at a time when the war with the Moghuls was at its zenith and slackness on the part of a peon during such an emergency which threatened the very existence of the Company in Bengal would have been an invitation to disaster and doom. Charnock was the last person to use the whip indiscriminately.

In personal life Job Charnock was perhaps the most kind-hearted man, for he does not forget to earmark legacies to his native servants. We quote from his will :

“Tenthly I give and bequeath to Budlydasse (Badli Das) one hundred rupees and the meanest sort of my sonns Cloathes lately deceased”.

“Eleventhly I give and bequeath to the Doctor now attending me fifty Rupees”.

“Twelfthly I give and bequeath to my Servants Gunnyshams ( Ghanashyam ) and Dallub ( Dalab ) each, twenty Rupees.....<sup>94</sup>”.

The tone and tenderness and considerate affection which runs through the testament places the obdurate old pioneer's character in a new light. We shall not stop to canvass the charge of cruelty brought against him by Hamilton, an interloper who hated the Company's servants for checking his illicit trade, and slandered them ; nor the stories told by his ungenerous successor of his last years, when his vigour and faculties declined. He had, no doubt, the faults born of unrestricted power and isolated stations of command. But his career attests that Job Charnock was a valiant and true servant, who for the good of his country set at nought all risks and sufferings, says

G. W. Forrest,<sup>95</sup> who calendered in India all surviving records pertaining to the East India Company during the 17th century.

### CHARNOCK MAUSOLEUM

The unostentatious massive octagonal structure with its serrated parapet and crowned with a domed kiosk surmounted by an urn in the north east corner of the St. John's Churchyard<sup>96</sup> enshrines the earthly remains of Job Charnock. The sarasenic architectural style of the monument apparently betrays the internment of an Englishman inside the tomb. Since he was the first English 'Nabob', the mausoleum fits in well with his habits and temperament.

A number of tombstones are fixed on the inside wall of this oldest piece of masonry<sup>97</sup> with its crumbling stucco and peeling plaster in Calcutta. Among them is a granite slab, probably brought from far off Pallavaram<sup>98</sup> in Tamil Nadu, containing a long Latin inscription, the top of which reads :

#### D.O.M

Jobus Charnock, Armiger  
 Anglus, et nup in hoc  
 regno Bengalensi dignissim, Anglorum  
 Agens. Mortalitatis suae exuvias  
 sub hoc marmore deposuit ut  
 in spe beatae resurrectionis ad  
 Christi Judicis adventum obdormirent.  
 Qui postquam in solo non  
 Suo peregrinatus esset dice.  
 Reversus est domum suae  
 aeternitatis decimo die 10th Januurii 1692.



(May the Lord remember the dead. Job Charnock, an English Gentleman, and lately in this most worthy kingdom of Bengal, Agent of the English, has deposited the remains of his mortality beneath this marble, that they may rest in the hope of the blessed resurrection unto the coming of Christ, the judge; who, after he had wandered abroad on soil not his own, returned to the home of his eternity on the 10th January, 1692 (1693).<sup>99</sup>

The chaplain who penned the above epitaph and baptised the Charnock girls (Mary, Elizabeth and Katherine) was the famous John Evans,<sup>100</sup> afterwards Bishop of Bangor and latterly Bishop of Meath, the premier Bishopric of Ireland. Evans and his wife accompanied Job Charnock after the abandonment of Hooghly, took part in the perilous and gallant occupation of malarious Hijili and after a brief return to Sutanati, and then fared to Madras with Charnock's party, when old Job was superseded by Captain Heath. It was while he was waiting for an opportunity of his final return to Bengal that his daughters were baptised by his old friend chaplain Evans. Mrs. Seaton and Mrs. Heathfield, who were the godmothers of Charnock's daughters for baptism, were Madras ladies. The latter was the widow of Robert Fleetwood and the former was the wife of Captain Francis Seaton, who commanded the garrison at Madras. Ellis, who stood sponsor, was Job's old friend and a member of his Council.<sup>101</sup>

Evans, the chaplain who baptised the little girls, was a Welshman; he had been attached to Charnock's party for some time. He might, of course, at any time, have performed the ceremony at Hooghly or Kasimbazar, although there was no church at either place. But the worries and anxieties of

life were sufficient to prevent Charnock from paying any attention to domestic matters, and it was not till he reached the Fort at Madras that he had leisure to think about such religious rites ; even then it is more than probable that Elihu Yale, the Agent of the Company at Madras, who so frequently interested himself in such affairs, suggested the ceremony.<sup>102</sup>

The Padre did not accompany Charnock on the latter's return, but remained at Madras for some time, and devoted himself so much to the commercial interests of certain adventurers, who were seriously challenging the Company's monopoly, that he is actually described by the Court as the "quondam minister but late great merchant". In 1693 the Madras Council warned Sir John Goldsborough that Evans was once more on his way to Sutanati "justly suspecting the buissy pollitick Padre goes on ill designs, to the prejudice of the Rt. Hon'ble Company's affairs".<sup>103</sup>

There is no doubt that the Charnock mausoleum is a family tomb. Besides the founder of Calcutta, who lies buried inside the monument, his native wife must be sharing the same grave, though no proof is forthcoming for this from official records. Mrs. Charnock died some time after the final return of Charnock to Sutanati on August 24, 1690. Probably she died in the middle of 1691. The mausoleum was erected by Charnock's son-in-law, Charles Eyre, in the latter part of 1697 and early part of 1698. There is no record to show that the tomb was erected at the expense of the Company, but it appears to have been done so from the fact that it was repaired by the Public Works Department in 1892.

Besides the Charnocks, their eldest daughter Mary and her only infant brother also share the mausoleum. The lower

portion of the tombstone of Job Charnock also contains the epitaph of Mary Charnock. It reads :

*Partier jacet*

MARIA, JOBI PRIMOGENITA, CAROLI EYRE  
 ANGLORUM HICCE, PRAEFECTI CONJUX CHARIS-  
 SIMA, QUAE OBIIT 19 DIE FEBRUARII A.D. 1696 (97).

(Beside him lies Mary, the first-born daughter of Job, most beloved wife of Charles Eyre of England, who died on the 19th day of February A.D. 1696/7).

“ A close inspection of this slab and the comparison of the lettering of the two inscriptions make it abundantly plain that they are not contemporaneous works, but that the lower half of the slab has been purposely left blank to receive such an inscription as it now exhibits. Thus the mausoluem with originally one epitaph must have been completed some time prior to the year 1697, and the addition made to it prior to the early part of 1698, when Mr. Eyre returned home, for it is to be presumed, from the terms of the epitaph, that he was at the time it was written actually ‘perfect to the English’. It is true that he returned in 1700 and for a few months resumed his former charge, but it was with the title of knighthood, which does not distinguish his name in the epitaph.”<sup>104</sup>

Charnock’s second daughter, Elizabeth,<sup>105</sup> married William Bowridge, and was living in Calcutta within two years of the tragedy of the Black Hole. Jonathan White bequeathed her and her daughter—also an Elizabeth—Rs. 50 for memorial rings, and concluded his will “that my daughter Katharine be sent for England for education with good attendance and provision for soe tender an infant the voyage, and that the executors accept

of soe good an opportunity to accompany her aunt Bowridge, if she goes for England in two years time ; otherwise that the child goe by such good commanders of a ship as my Executors shall see fitting, others if it shall please God the child arrive in England is to be committed to my Couzin Mary Hungerford and my brother, to whose care and guardianship jointly with my brother William White I recommend the child during her marage". The date of this will is November 14, 1704, but among the passengers carried by the *Heathcote* from Bengal in January 1715 is to be found "Mrs. Elizabeth and Sarah Bowridge as per order of the Court 24th December 1714". Elizabeth had a son named William on whose behalf Sir Charles Eyre wrote from Kew :—

To Hon'ble Court of Directors of East India Company.

Gentlemen,

My indisposition hinders me from coming to sign as one of the Securytys for my nephew William Bowridge but I do promise to do it when I am well enough to come to town.

Cue Green

Charles Eyre.

April 25th, 1721

Katherine Charnock, Job's youngest daughter, married Jonathan White, also a servant of the Company. He became Second of Council and died in Calcutta on the 3rd January 1704, three years after the death of his young wife. Katherine also lies buried in St. John's Churchyard, but not in the same family tomb. Her epitaph reads as follows :

Hic Jacet

CATHERINE WHITE

Domini Jonathanis White, uxor dilectissima et  
 Tov Makapitov Jobi Charnock  
 filia natu minima ;  
 quae primo In partu et aetatis flore  
 annum agens urum de viginte :  
 Mortem obiit heu ! immaturam 21 Januarii, 1700/1,  
 Siste parumper, Christiane Lector,  
 (Vel quis quis es tandem) et mecum defle  
 Duram sexus muliebris sortem  
 Qui per elapsa tot annorum millia  
 culpam prim Evae luit Parentis  
 et luet usque ; Dum aeternum stabit,  
 In dolore paries filios" — Genesis III. 16

(Here lies Catherine White, most beloved wife of Lord Jonathan White, youngest daughter of the above Job Charnock, who in her first child-bearing and in the bloom of youth in her 19th year, died, alas, an untimely death on the 21st of January, 1700/1.

Stand a while, Christian readers, whoever you may be, and bewail with me the hard lot of the female sex, who through the passage of so many thousands of years, pays the price of the guilt of Eve, her first parent, and shall pay it for ever, while eternal decree shall stand — "In grief shall you bear sons"<sup>106</sup>—Genesis, III. 16)

Charnock had a son who died as an infant. Charnock's will states : "Tenthly ... and the meanest of my sonns Cloaths lately deceased". This shows that Charnock's Hindu wife must

have given birth to son after his return from Madras in 1690 and the establishment of Calcutta. Since the boy's name is not mentioned in the baptismal register (he was not born then) he must have been born after Charnock's return to Sutanati on August 24, 1690 ; otherwise Charnock would not have used the expression, "my son's clothes *lately* deceased".<sup>107</sup> The will is dated January 9, 1692/3. As we have stated earlier, Mrs. Charnock's name was deliberately omitted from the baptismal register as he was not married to her according to Christian rites and he had not converted her to Christianity. She must have been present at Madras during his stay there.

We shall conclude this portrait of Charnock by quoting the Rev. H. B. Hyde, the chaplain of St. John's, who took the opportunity in 1892 of ascertaining whether the Father of Calcutta had really interred his remains in the mausoleum. There is no doubt that Charnock's wife must be sharing the mausoleum with her husband as she was present in the infant settlement of Sutanati to give birth to a son to the old Job. Hyde excavated the grave to a depth of four feet in the first instance. It was thereafter opened to a depth of six feet at which the trace of human remains were encountered. He says : "The excavation was somewhat smaller than an ordinary grave and lay E. and W. in the centre of the floor. At the bottom of it the workmen had cleared a level at the western end of which they were beginning to dig a little deeper when a bone became visible. This bone was left *in situ*, undisturbed, and the digging had ceased on its discovery. On seeing this bone I felt sure it could be no other than one of the bones of the left fore-arm of the person buried which must have laid crossed upon the breast. A little beyond it I observed a small

object in the earth which I took at first for a large coffin nail, but on this being handed up to me it was apparent that it was the largest joint, of probably a middle finger, and that, judging from its position relative to the bone, of the left hand. This bone I replaced. I permitted no more earth to be removed save only a little above and to the east of the remains, sufficient to reveal a black stratum in the soil which might have been the decayed coffin-lid. It was quite evident that a few more strokes of the spade would discover the rest of the skeleton, perhaps perfect after just 200 years of burial. There can be no reasonable doubt, but that arguing from the position of the body and the depth at which it lay, it was the very one to enshrine which only the mausoleum was originally built -- the mortal part of the Father of Calcutta.

“Having seen what I did, I have the grave filled in, for I feared to leave it open lest the coolies might ransack its contents in search of rings or other valuables, and further I felt it improper, in view of the interest which must attach to such investigation, to permit to continue it alone. If it were to be prosecuted at all it should at least be in presence of a representative company of Englishmen. For my own part with the bones of the famous pioneer’s hand accidentally discovered before me, and the strange and solemn statement of his epitaph just above them that he had laid his mortal remains there himself “*ut to spe beatae resurrectionis ad Christi judicis adventum obdormirent*”,<sup>108</sup> I felt strongly restrained them further...”. Of course, this does not approve or disprove of the burial of Charnock’s Hindu wife in the same tomb.

A wanderer throughout his life, Charnock returned to his eternal home in Sutanati in 1690. Few remember his name in

Calcutta. His name has been erased from the Municipal Corporation's and other Government records. Charnock's city has remained a nightmare to planners and historians alike as Charnock himself has remained an enigma to the students of Calcutta's history. Students of Petrology who study the problem of Charnockite<sup>109</sup> seldom realise that the Father of Calcutta, in whose honour the stone has been named, is still abiding in the hope of joyful resurrection at the coming of Christ, the judge (as has been aptly epitaphed by that merchant parson, Rev. John Evans). We shall feel amply rewarded if we have resurrected him from the clutches of myth-makers, gossip-mongers and fiction-writers.

## REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA (14th Edition, Vol. P. 330, 1973) gives a better account of Charnock. The account given in the 15th Edition (30 Volumes, Chicago, 1974, MICROPAEDIA, Vol, II, P. 770) gives a distorted note on Charnock. The contributor of the note seems to have depended upon Alexander Hamilton's account of the Founder of Calcutta. The picture of Charnock published, *for the first time*, along with the note, seems be a spurious one. It is stated to have been one after an engraving by T. Trotter (c. 1750-1803), after a portrait by White, from the Mansell Collection. Charnock is portrayed as an Apollo-like youth in typical English dress and fashion. He was not a man of fame when he left England for Bengal. He was an ordinary merchant, and it is on record that he entered the 'Moore's fashion' as soon as he reached the shores of Bengal. The portrait, therefore, is not in consonance with the facts mentioned in any official and contemporary records of the 17th century.



2. Biographical details have been very kindly supplied by the India Office Records, vide letter FL 2/PN/108 dated August 22, 1974. The Lancashire Archives do not have anything on Job Charnock (Letter No. L. 33 dated May 29, 1974 from R. Sharpe France, County Archivist, Lancashire Record Office to the author).
3. The will says he is a 'yeoman'. Stephen Charnock's father is confirmed as "an attorney or a Solicitor". The will does not perhaps elaborate upon the testator himself. *Wills, Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 58 Hyde.*
4. EF 1661-64, P. 294 and note 1.
5. Haberdasher — a seller of small wares.
6. Candleweeke street at the east end of "Great Eastcheape" is now known as Cannon Street.
7. COURT MINUTES dated August 3, 1664.
8. The DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY (Edited by Sir Leslie Stephen & Sir Sidney Lee), Oxford, 1950, Vol. IV, P, 134 ; for his Will, WILLS, PCC 92, Bath.
9. The history of this legacy is as follows :  
The Vestry minutes of the parish of St. Katherine Cree Church for 28 August 1695 include the following entry (Guildhall Library 1196/1, P. 437)  

“Whereas Mr. Job Charnock late of East India, merchant, hath given fifty pounds to the poore of this parish, 'tis ordered that in Consideracion of the said fifty

pounds the poore shall have distributed among them three pounds yearly for ever, by two equall payments, viz. upon the 5th of November and the 5th of February yearly". (Information kindly supplied by Keeper of Manuscripts, City of London Libraries, GUILDHALL LIBRARY, Basinghall Street, London, EC2P 2EJ vide letter CC/GS dated 18th September, 1974.

At a subsequent vestry, held on the 1st February, 1699, it was ordered that "the £ 50 given to the parish for the use of the poor by Mr. Job Charnock, and the £ 100 given for the like use by Mr. John Jackson should be settled on the house belonging to the parish, situate in Fenchurch Street, and the said house was thereby charged with the repayment thereof, with five per cent. interest, such interest being £ 7. 10 s. to be yearly paid for the use of the poor."

In 1860, the house, No. 91, Fenchurch Street, was let on lease to John Moore for a term of 21 years from Christmas, 1849, at the rent of £ 42 per annum, and Charnock's £ 2-10-0 interest was carried to the bread account for the distribution of twenty 2 lb. loaves to 20 persons every Sunday. The House No. 91, Fenchurch Street, was taken under the provisions of Michael Angelo Taylor's Act ( 57 Geo. III. c. XXIX ) and the purchase money was paid into Court and was represented by a sum of £ 1,949-10-8 Consols. By the statement prepared under the City of London Parochial Charities Act, 1883, for the Parish of St. Katherine Cree, this sum is scheduled as the endowment of the Charities of Richard Lingham, Job Charnock and John Jackson, and by the operation of that Act and the Central Scheme made thereunder, on the 23rd

February, 1891, it was merged in the Central Fund of City Parochial Foundation. (Information supplied by India Office Records ).

10. Since Stephen was born in 1628, Job's year of birth may be taken as 1631. The Registers of the Parish of St. Katherine Cree Church do not commence until 1663, after Job Charnock had departed for India, and therefore could not contain any entries for him. A check of the usual biographical sources for Londonders of this period has also been unsuccessful by the Keeper of Manuscripts, Guildhall Library.
11. Dr. Wilson's (EARLY ANNALS, I. Pp 142-43) statement that 'he may have been imperfectly educated' (after Yule, H. D. II. P. 90) is unwarranted. Since Richard Charnock was a solicitor and could give his son Stephen the best education of the day, it is illogical to think that Job was not given the same attention. Unless he had received very liberal education, he would have found it difficult to master Hindu Philosophy, astronomy etc.
12. A number of autographed facsimile letters of Charnock have been reproduced by Sir Henry Yule in the *Diary of William Hedges*, Vol II. Some more letters may be found in the *Diaries of Streynsham Master* edited by Sir R. C. Temple.
13. Oliver Cromwell, the Protector, hesitated to grant a fresh monopoly to the London Company and the United Joint Stock virtually ceased to send out capital to India after 1654. (Dodwell—The CAMBRIDGE HISTORY

OF INDIA, Vol. V, Pp 94-95 — William Foster's Chapter IV — 'The East India Company, 1600-1740). In 1657 the principal merchants engaged in the trade, including the interlopers, agreed in desiring the continuance of the Joint Stock system. A new Charter was granted to this resuscitated London East India Company on October 1, 1657. The proprietors of the old Joint Stock had issued instructions to wind up all the Bengal factories in 1655. Maurice Thomson and associates were the principal merchants who were trading in their own name, independent of the old United Stock. He became the Governor of the resuscitated London Company in 1657.

14. EF 1655-60, P. 90.
15. Ken and Sheldon were appointed Chief and second at Kasimbazar respectively on February 27, 1658. Sheldon returned home in 1664. He was the father of the Kasimbazar silk trade. Sheldon continued to be associated with the Company at home for very many years. He became one of the shareholders ("adventurers") of the Company in 1670 by purchasing stock worth £ 1050. Ken and Sheldon went home together. Ken's account of the Trade at Kasimbazar may be read in Dr. Wilson's EARLY ANNALS, Vol I, P 376 ff.
16. H.D. III. Pp. 192-193 ; O.C. 2673. For a revised transcription, see EF 1655-60, P. 195.
17. No factor was recruited without executing a bond, providing sureties. Even as late as June 29, 1681 the Agen at Hooghly, Matthias Vincent, wrote to Charnock :

“Mr. Charnock haveing not signed to any bonds and indentures to the Hon’ble Compa. since he left their Service anno 1663 or 1664, and they having severala times pressed his doeing of saide, and have never hitherto reversed that order : however, it has Lain dormant by the omission or forgetfulness of Mr. Walter Clavell deceased, the late Chiefe of Bengal. We haveing weighed the thing and do not finde it convenient that soe great a trust as Cossumbazar factory should be reposed any longer in any one’s hands (as Chiefe especially) who, contrary to the Saide Hon’ble Comp. practice with all their servants great and small, is under noe bonds or indentures to them ; we doe therefore herewith send you a blanck bond and indenture enordering him, in Psurance ( ? pursuance ) to the Hon’ble Compa. Commands, immediately to sign and seal to them both, and to deliver them soc signed and sealed to Allen Catchpoole and John Thedder, who are of Council of Cassimbazar factory, to be wittnessed by them, and that then he dispeed ( ? dispatch ) them to us by two trusty expresses, and therewith send us a Govt Letter the names of two persons in England he appoints for his security there that we may by the expected shipping accordingly advise our Hon’ble Employers, thereof”. (Khan, Shafaat Ahmed — SOURCES FOR THE HISTORY OF BRITISH INDIA in the Seventeenth Century, Ox. U. Press, 1926, P 338). Job Charnock executed the bond (date uncertain) in July 1681 and sent it along with his letter dated 14th of that month. But this Bond is untraceable in the India Office Records. ( “Unfortunately our *Factory Records* I OR : G/20 — for Hughly do not for some reason include any letters received for 1681 : so I have been unable to locate this bond there. In our series of *General Correspondence* I have traeced two despatches from the Court of

Directors dated 5 January 1681, one to the Chief and Court at Hughly, one to Charnock himself, authorising him to take the position of Chief at Cassambuzar, and to be first in the succession to Hughly-IOR : F/3/89 f 270, 278"—Vide letter from India Office to the author dated June 3, 1973). We do not know the names of Charnock's sureties in England. No mention of this document is made in the Public Despatches from the Court. It appears that the indenture never reached the Company and the Court did not insist on it.

18. I have checked the Court Minutes of these years.
19. H.D. II. P. 45 ; Yule has not given the full reference. It is included in the COURT MINUTES, Vol. XXIV, P. 51
20. H.D. III. P. 189.
21. EF 1655-60, Pp 190-91.
22. A new translation of Shah Shuja's *Nishan* by Maulavi Muhammad Israil Khan, may be read in the ENGLISH FACTORIES IN INDIA, 1655-60, Pp 111-12. The *Nishan* is dated Sixth April, 1656.
23. It is a common fallacy that Job Charnock at first served at Kasimbazar in 1657/58. The contributor of the note on Charnock in ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA. 15th Edition, also says, 'he was stationed first at Cossimbazar, now an industrial town north of Calcutta'.
24. H.D. III. Pp 192-93.
25. H.D. III. P. 194 ; O.C. 2690 for full text and EF 1655-60, P. 278 for an extract.
26. H.D. II. P. 45 and note 1.

27. & 28. EF 1661-64, P. 393.
29. Latimer, Eardley-HANDBOOK TO CALCUTTA AND ENVIRONS, Second Edition, Calcutta, 1966, P. 3. It is rather strange that a member of the Calcutta Historical Society is committing such blunders (as the statement that "In the same year—1663—he was appointed Chief of the Company's factories in Hooghly..."). Geoffrey Moorehouse (CALCUTTA, Penguin Edition, P. 29) and Desmond Doig (CALCUTTA : AN ARTIST'S IMPRESSION, Calcutta, 1964, P 2) also repeat the mistake.
30. EF 1670-79, Pp 330-31.
31. FACTORY RECORDS, HUGLI, I, P. 13.
32. Public Despatches from England, December 1669, 4 L. B., Pp 289, 306.
33. H.D. II, P. 46.
34. Balasore Letter to the Court undated ; Factory Records, Hugli, Vol. IV Pp 15-16 ; EF 1670-77, P. 338.
35. Balasore letter to the Court dated 17 and 28th December, 1674 ; Factory Records, Hugli, Vol. IV, P. 36 ; 1670-77, P. 367.
36. O. C. 4044, f. 14 ; EF 1670-77 P. 376.
37. Court's General letter to Fort St. George dated London 24th December 1675, Para 28, L.B. Vol. 5, Pp 213-235 ; H.D. II, P. 46 ; EE 1670-777, P. 415
38. EF 1670-77, Pp 415 and 423 (notes omitted).
39. Letter from Matthias Vincent & Samuel Harvey dated Dacca September 28, 1678 to Job Charnock ; Fort St.

George Consultation dated 7th August, 1678 (Wednesday), Para 5.

Charnock's marriage with the Indian lady, in all probability, took place in 1678. See CALCUTTA REVIEW for 1847 reproduced in THE CHARM OF INDIA (edited by Claud Field, London, no year), P 297. This is the reason why he was unwilling to leave Patna or Bengal.

40. Charnock's refusal discussed at a consultation at Fort St. George on Monday, the 9th (December, 1678), Para 1. ; H.D. II, P. 47 for Charnock's letter dated 28th October, 1678.
41. Letter from Fort St. George to Matthias Vincent dated July 12, 1679, Para 16.
42. References are not given from here onwards till the end of this Section as the facts are well known and the original records have been printed in the DIARIES OF STREYNHAM MASTER (edited by R.C. Temple, London, 1911 — 2 volumes) and the DIARY OF WILLIAM HEDGES (Vol. II, Pp 45—100) edited by Sir Henry Yule (Hakluyt Society, 1887-95). Dr. C.R. Wilson in his EARLY ANNALS OF ENGLISH IN BENGAL (Vol. I) also gives the facts in a narrative form. We are giving the bare facts in order to give a whole picture of Charnock's career.
43. Wilson, C.R. — EARLY ANNALS OF THE ENGLISH IN BENGAL, Vol. I, P. 102 ; See also Amarendra Mookerji's (Edited) GLIMPSES OF THE OLDEN TIMES — INDIA UNDER EAST INDIA COMPANY, CALCUTTA, 1968 where a major portion of EARLY ANNALS (Vol. I) is reproduced. See P. 64 of Mookherji for this quotation.



44. CALCUTTA REVIEW, Vol. 7, Jan—June, 1847, Pp 259-60 ; Also see Claud Field (Edited) — The CHARM OF INDIA, Pp 299-7.
45. Wilson, C.R. — EARLY ANNALS, Vol. I, P. 125 ; Wilson, C.R. — OLD FORT WILLIAM IN BENGAL, London, 1906, Vol. I, Extract No. 5.
46. Wilson, C.R. — EARLY ANNALS, Vol. I, P. 125 ; G.W. Forrest, 'Charnock', BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, June 1902, P. 780 for an original transcript with archaic spellings.
47. O.C. 2211 ; EF 1651-54, P. 48 and O. C. 2210 ; EF 1651-54, P. 47. The *Lyoness* did not proceed farther than Balasore.
48. 'A Tale of Two Cities', RUDYARD KIPLING'S VERSE (Inclusive Edition, 1885-1918), London, P.87
49. Court of Committees to the Agent and Council to the Bay of Bengal at Hooghly, dated 24 January 1667, (Reproduced in the DIARY OF WILLIAM HEDGES, Vol. III, P. 199) and EF 1668-69, P 170.
50. Ray, A.K. — A SHORT HISTORY OF CALCUTTA (in CENSUS OF INDIA 1901, Calcutta) 1902, P. 16 ; Hunter, W.W. — THACKERAYS IN INDIA, Oxford, 1897, Pp 40-41
51. Wilson — EARLY ANNALS, Vol. I, P 116, 127 ; Mookerji, P. 79
52. General Letter from Court to Fort St. George dated February 15, 1689 (Public Despatches from England, Vol 9, Pp 44-5), Para 33

53. Last but one para of Court's letter to Fort George dated September 11, 1689 (Public Despatches from England, Vol. 10, Pp 1-13)
54. Bruce, John — ANNALS OF THE HONOURABLE EAST INDIA COMPANY FROM THEIR ESTABLISHMENT BY THE CHARTER OF QUEEN ELIZABETH 1600, TO THE UNION OF LONDON AND ENGLISH EAST INDIA COMPANIES 1707—1708 ; London, 1810 ; Vol. II, Pp 449-50 ; EF 1678-84, P. 255.

Bruce was the historiographer (or the keeper of the records) of the East India Company.

55. Court's letter dated 18th January, 1681 (82) to the Agent and Council in the Bay (of Bengal), Para 4.
56. Court's letter dated 18th November 1681 to the Agent and Council in the Bay, Para 2.
57. Court's letter dated 5th January 1680 (81) to the Agent and Governor and Council at Fort St. George, Para 14
58. Court's letter dated 3rd January 1693 (94) to the Agent & Council in the Bay ; H.D. II P. 89
59. Court's General Letter to Fort St George dated February 15, 1689 (Public Despatches from England, Vol 9. Pp 24—32) ; Para 17 ; H.D. II. P. 286
60. Court's General Letter to Bengal dated 27th August 1688 (Public Despatches from England, Vol. 9, Pp 24-32), Para 17 ; H.D. II. P. 286
61. Court's Instructions to Sir John Goldsborough dated February 29, 1692, Para 3 ; H.D. II. P. 157

62. Court's letter to Bengal dated April 10, 1693 ; H. D. P. 263
63. Court's letter to Fort St. George dated 28th September, 1687 (Public Despatches from England, Vol. 8, Pp 181-204) Para 14.
64. Penny, Mrs. Frank — FORT ST. GEORGE, London, 1900 Ch. XII P. 121
65. Charnock's letter dated July 6, 1678 to the Hooghly Council ; H.D. II. P. 46
66. *Farman* — an imperial rescript
67. *Hasbul hukum* — An order issued by the Emperor by word of mouth.
68. Charnock's letter dated July 21, 1678 to the Hooghly Council ; H.D. II. P. 46
69. Home Misc. Vol. XXXVI, P. 28. Ken's statement that he along with Charnock visited Mir Jumla's camp in July 1661.
70. Bowrey, Thomas — A GEOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT OF COUNTRIES ROUND THE BAY OF BENGAL, 1669 to 1679 (Edited by R.C. Temple), Hakluyt Society, London, 1905, P. 224
71. Khan, Shafaat Ahmad — JOHN MARSHALL IN INDIA, 1668-1672, Ox. U P., 1927, P. 217
72. Hunter, W.W. — THACKERAYS IN INDIA, Oxford, 1897, Pp 21-52
73. Contemporary Englishmen who have lived in, or visited, Patna (Thomas Bowrey and John Marshall) or travellers like Richard Bell & John Campbell (TRAVELS IN

THE EAST INDIES, *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. for 1906-1908) Niccolao Manucci (STORIA DO MOGOR, 4 Vols, Calcutta Reprint), 1970, Francois Bernier (TRAVELS IN THE MOGUL EMPIRE, Indian Reprint, New Delhi, 1972), Jean Baptiste Tavernier TRAVELS IN INDIA 2 Vols. Ox U.P. 1926), Monsieur Thevenot, Dr. John Francis Gemelli Careri ( Surendranath Sen — INDIAN TRAVELS OF THEVENOT & CARERI, New Delhi, 1949) and Jovhannes Joughayetti ('Ledger of.. , JOURNAL OE THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL, 1966, Pp 153-186 ) and others have not mentioned anything against Charnock.

74. Letters to Madam Aress ( Eyres ) at 'Chitty Nutty' and Madame Katherine Charnock at 'Chittynutty' by Wentworth & (Sir Henry) Johnson from Blackwall, December 20, 1697 — H.D. II. P. 96
75. EF 1655-60, P. 402
76. EF 1634-36, Introduction, P. 36
77. EF 1655-60, P. 193
78. EF 1670-77, P. 376 last para and note 4 for Edward's Brahmin mistress.
79. The DIARY OF WILLIAM HEDGES, Vol I, P. 52. Charnock's marriage and the rescue of the *Sati*, according to this statement takes place in 1663. This is evidently wrong because in 1663 and again in 1670 and 1672 he wanted to return home. Since his parents were dead and his only brother was living in oblivion, Charnock would not have thought of returning to

London had he married in 1663, 1670 or 1672. The Nawab of Patna would not have spared Charnock had he lived with a Hindu lady of Brahmin community without marrying her. The story of Charnock's living in adultery with the wife of a 'Gentoo' and the troubles he had to face is unfounded as there are no strictures against him in the letters of the Court. No scandal has been reported against Charnock in the extant private correspondence and the accounts left by his contemporaries.

80. Rankin, J.T. — 'Dacca Diaries', JOURNAL OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL, Vol. XVI (1920), Pp 91-158
81. H.D. I. P. 102
82. Hamilton, Alexander — A NEW ACCOUNT OF THE EAST INDIES, Edinburgh 1727 & 1744 (Edited by William Foster, 2 Vols, London, 1930). The quotations are from his original edition. See Foster's Edition, Vol. II, P. 5 for these quotations.
83. The DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY, Vol. VIII, P. 1017 for Hamilton.
84. Hamilton makes the venue of the *Sati* at Hooghly and not at Patna. The rescue of the *Sati* takes place before the 'Mogul's war' and *not at Patna*, according to the Captain. Yule (H.D. II. P. 91), says that "it is not likely that a European at Patna, or elsewhere in the country, would have ventured in those days to abduct a *sati* widow from the pyre". The BENGAL OBITUARY (Calcutta, 1848, P. 2) simply follows Hamilton. The

*sati* story is discredited by all. Let us see what Holwell has to say in this respect :

“It has been already remarked in a marginal note that the Gentoo women are not allowed to burn, without an order of leave from the Muhammedan Government, it is proper also to inform our readers that this privilege is never withheld from them. There has been instances known when the victim has, by Europeans, been forceably rescued from the pile ; it is currently said and believed (how true we will not aver) that wife of Mr. Job Charnock was by him snatched from sacrifice ; be this as it may, the outrage is considered by the *Gentoos*, an atrocious, and wicked violation of their sacred rites, and privileges’. (John Zepaniah Holwell – HISTORICAL TRACTS, Part II, P. 99 ; London, 1774).

85. O.C. 7200; H.D. II, P. 209 where Littleton's letter is quoted.
86. Moorehouse, Geoffrey — CALCUTTA (Penguin Edition, 1974), P. 29
87. Doig, Desmond—CALCUTTA: AN ARTIST'S IMPRESSION, Calcutta, 1970 (?), P. 2
88. Chunder, Dr. Pratap Chunder — CHARNOCKER BADHU (Charnock's Wife, in Bengali), Calcutta.
89. Ghose, Subodh — KIMBADADANTIR DESHE, Calcutta (Story of Lila and Charnock)
90. JOURNAL OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL, Vol. LXIII, Part III, No. 1 (1894) for Dr. Wise's article.

91. Penny — FORT St. GEORGE, P. 125 and BENGAL PAST & PRESENT, Vol II, P. 82 for a photostat copy of this particular page of this baptismal register. Also see G.W. Forrest, 'Charnock', BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, 1902, P.781.
92. Chatterton Eyre — HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN INDIA, London, 1924, P. 67. Chatterton asks: "May we not hope that the words of the epitaph in his Mausoleum in St. John's Church-yard, Calcutta, in which it is stated that he is buried as a Christian according to his expressed wish — represent what he really was in God's sight?"
93. H.D II. P. 91
94. Wills, P.C.C. 91 Irby.
95. Forrest, G.W. — 'Charnock', BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, June 1902 Pp 771-782.
96. For St. John's Church read Elliot Walter Madge's ILLUSTRATED HANDBOOK TO ST. JOHN'S, Calcutta, 1909. St. John's was the old Cathedral, till St. Paul's was built.
97. This is the oldest piece of *masonry* in Calcutta. The tomb of Bezabeeh, "the wife of the late charitable Sookias, who separated from this world to life eternal on the 21st day of Nakha in the year 15" (i.e. July 1630) at St. Nazareth Church (Armenian) is an anachronism as the settlement of Sutanati was established by Charnock in 1690 only. The Armenians settled in Sutanati immediately after the establishment of Calcutta. There is a difference between a tombstone and a masonry

structure. A Chinese inscribed slab (dated A.D. 1652) was discovered from the St. John's Churchyard in 1886 and fortunately no Chinese has come forward to claim Sutanati as a Chinese settlement long before Charnock established it. The tombstone of the Armenian lady must have come from elsewhere as is the Chinese inscribed slab.

98. Holland, Thomas H — 'The Petrology of Job Charnock's Tombstone' JOURNAL OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL, Vol. LXII, Part II (1893) Pp 162-64
99. I am indebted to the Ven'ble Basil Manuel, the then Archdeacon of Calcutta for getting the epitaphs of Job Charnock and his daughters, Mary and Catherine, translated by the Rev. K.N. Jennings, the then Vice—Principal of the Bishop's College, Calcutta, in October 1964.
100. Penny, *Ibid*, P. 126 ; H.D. II, Pp 130-132; Chatterton, *Ibid*, Pp 65-68.
101. Penny, *Ibid*, P. 125 and note
102. Penny, *Ibid*, P. 126
103. Firminger, W.K. — 'A Page from the Baptismal Register of St. Mary's, Fort St. George, BENGAL PAST & PRESENT, Vol. II, P. 83
104. Quoted by Firminger in BENGAL PAST & PRESENT, Vol. II, P. 83
105. We follow Firminger here.
106. English translation by Rev K.N. Jennings.



107. G.W. Forrest adds: The will was “Witnd. Jonathan White, Francis Houghton — Jon Hill 12 June 1695, Commrs. To Robert Dorrell, Attorney deputed by Mary Charnock (now at Bengall in the East Indies) the natural and lawfull daughter and one of the Executors named in the Will of Job Charnock late of Bengall *afsd.* dec. to admr. during the absence and to the use of the said Mary Charnock — Daniel Sheldon the other Excr. having renounced.”
108. PROCEEDINGS OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL, January-December 1893, P. 78-83
109. Holland, *Ibid*
110. The father of Calcutta died a poor man on January 10, 1693, leaving the management of the struggling settlement of Sutanati in the hands of Francis Ellis. His thatched house near the river bank caught fire on the night of December 11, 1694, and the contents were auctioned for Rs. 575, leaving no trace of it.—Wilson — OLD FORT WILLIAM IN BENGAL, Vol. I, London, 1906, December 19, 1694—March 1694-95/April 8 1694/96, Pp 15-16. Lord Curzon’s statement (BRITISH GOVERNMENT IN INDIA, Vol. II, P. 2) that Charnock’s house was at Barrackpore evidently rests on oral tradition recorded in the BENGAL OBITUARY (Calcutta, 1848. P. 2). There is no doubt that the erstwhile name of Barrackpore was Chanak or Channock (Court’s letter to Chief and Council in the Bay dated 12th December, 1677 sent by the ship *Nathaniel*, para 47, makes mention of Channock ; Also see H.D. III. 200). See Note on Page 99 of H.D. II. for a discussion and demolition of this myth.

## Abbreviations

EF = ENGLISH FACTORIES IN INDIA upto 1669 (13 vols)  
edited by Sir William Foster and subsequent four  
volumes edited by Sir Charles Fawcett. Oxford 1906-  
1955.

H.D. = DIARY OF WILLIAM HEDGES ; Vol. I. edited by  
T. Barlow and Vols II & III edited by Sir Henry Yule  
for Haklyut Society, 1887-1895.

Court = Governor and Committees (= Directors) of the  
London East India Company.

COURT MINUTES = A CALENDAR OF THE COURT  
MINUTES ETC. OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY  
1635-79 By Ethel Bruce Sainsbury, 8 Vols, Oxford,  
1906-27.

O.C. — ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE series of Records  
in the India Office.

# JOB CHARNOCK

By

**Philip Woodruff**

Madras was the first of the three Presidencies to claim sovereignty, and the first to be chartered — in 1687 — as a Municipal Corporation with a Mayor's Court. If its President and Council were also the first to develop some sense of responsibility to the people they ruled, it was perhaps partly due to their comparative security. Madras had till 1688 no formidable neighbour than the King of Golconda ; but Bombay was menaced by the Marathas, while Calcutta was in the heart of the richest province of the Mogul Empire.

The Portuguese as usual had been first in Bengal. But they incurred the anger of Shah Jehan because they not unreasonably held aloof when he rose in arms against his father Jahangir. Once Shah Jehan was firmly on the throne he took his revenge, driving the Portuguese out of Hooghly, massacring the men and carrying off the women. The English crept joyfully into the perilous vacancy thus created.

In 1640, the skill of the Company's physician, Dr Boughton, won them further privileges. There was soon well established at Hooghly a Bay Council, subordinate to the Agent and Council at Madras, having jurisdiction over factories at Bala-sore, Cossimbazar, Patna, Dacca and Singhiya. Their letters and records are preserved and there are the private journals of Streynsham Master and William Hedges. Master had been

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\* From THE MEN WHO RULED INDIA : Vol. I. THE FOUNDERS by Philip Woodruff (Mason) Jonathan Cape, 30 Bedford Square, London, Second Edition, 8th impression, 1963, Pp 70-75.

employed as a young man on the West Coast ; he had been back in England for two years and a half when in 1675 he was selected as a fit and able person to restore order to the settlements on the East Coast. In these the Company suspected, with some justice, that there was not only inattention to business but a good deal of private trade carried on either openly, or what was worse, through interlopers or pirates.

Master was a good choice, for he was a born administrator, exact and thorough, painstaking and energetic. He began at once a series of tours up the Madras coast and into Bengal and at station after station composed quarrels, went through the accounts, drew up gradation lists of the Company's servants in order of seniority, inspected warehouses and buildings, gave orders for repairs and made regulations for the future, only to find on his next visit that much of the work had to be done again. He had been perhaps a trifle too impatient with those less able and energetic than himself ; he was a little too fond of his own way ; this, and his being attended on his ' progress (as we may call it) with such a princely train and charge' were made excuses in Leadenhall Street for his dismissal, the truth, one may suspect, being simply that he was too able and too masterful.

In 1680, a year that will do as well as another, the English in Bengal may be observed to display many of the less pleasant aspects of petty officialdom. There are quarrels about precedence and transfers ; Charnock refuses to keep the books as Second at Hooghly and insists on the place that is his due ; Hervey is rebuked for taking too long on his journey from Hooghly to Patna ; there is the unsavoury business of Thomas, the warehouse-keeper and Third at Hooghly, who 'having been some time distracted in his wits' becomes really mad and says the most unpleasant things about his wife's liking for Vincent, the

First in Council. But behind the quarrels and the pettiness of office is always the relationship with the Moguls, in which there is usually a hint of menace.

Aurangzebe had restored the poll-tax on unbelievers and this had to be compounded for. Presents to the Viceroy of Bengal and his subordinates are a continual trouble ; the Viceroy expects a present and so does his *diwan* or Prime Minister ; there is also the Emperor's diwan, an official from the central revenue office who since the days of Akbar and Todar Mal has accompanied every Viceroy. There is the Governor and his Minister at Dacca ; in Bihar there is another Viceroy and another hierarchy. And they all have clerks. Persian horses were a favourite present in Bengal ; cordial waters in Madras ; there is a list of acceptable presents thoughtfully sent by the Emperor's Minister, as a child before a birthday writes to a favourite aunt, which includes :

'Boxes with clockwork ; China screens with clockwork, both painted and with images ; images and junks that go with clockwork. ...

'Europe fusees ; one or two small field pieces, guns, etc., will not be amiss...'

Elephants and horses are mentioned *en passant* but :

'Good pieces of Ambergrease will do extremely well ..' and

'Clocks and watches that strike or have chimes you must by all means send...'

This was for the Emperor ; in Bengal, however, rupees would usually do extremely well. But the treatment was habit-forming ; the dose had to be not only repeated but increased if the

symptoms were not to recur. By an expenditure of fifty thousand rupees, an order had been obtained from the Emperor permitting the Company to trade on terms which would end all difficulties but ; needless to say, when the order came it could be interpreted by local officials in a sense quite different from that intended by the English, and it continued to be necessary to give presents as before. In Patna, there was some question of whether an outgoing Viceroy should receive a present as well as his successor ; Peacock, the Chief of the Factory, and Meverell, his Third, were seized, forced to walk through the town bare-headed and bare-footed and subjected to many other indignities before they paid up and were released.

The position was really intolerable ; the Emperor's order, obtained at so much expense of money, time and trouble, was valueless ; there was really nothing for it but sooner or later to convince the Mogul that it was worth being friendly with the English. The dispute dragged on, with arguments about customs, poll tax and presents ; at last came the inevitable open breach. Job Charnock, now the First in the Bay Council, assumed the rank of lieutenant-colonel, which was his automatically in time of war, and defended a part of the modern Calcutta with some amateur skill and a remarkable display of military tenacity in the face of much stronger forces. After one or two rebuffs, he scored a minor tactical victory and made a truce ; then, seizing the chance to do with a good grace what he would soon have been forced to do with no grace at all, he withdrew to an Island at the mouth of the Hooghly, where he soon had to stand a second seige.

Charnock is a man who for some reason has touched the imagination of English and Indians alike. Here is an account of his withdrawal :

‘Mr. Chanak with great indignation, prepared to fight ; but as he had a very small force and only one vessel was present at the time, while the Moguls had assembled in great number, he saw no advantage in taking any hostile measure against them and was obliged to weigh anchor. He had a burning-glass in his ship with which, by concentrating the sun’s rays, he burnt the river face of the city as far as Chandarnagar. With a view to avenge this injury, the army commander wrote to the police-station at Makhua with orders to stop the vessel. The police officer accordingly prepared an iron chain, each link of which was twenty pounds in weight.... The chain being extended across the river, the vessel was intercepted, but Mr. Chanak cut through the chain with a European sword and went on his way ...’

Sir Josiah was not the man to put up with insult and humiliation ; he declared war on the Mogul Emperor, perhaps the richest and most powerful monarch in the world, and sent six companies of infantry and ten armed vessels under Captain Heath to conquer India. Their operations were made more difficult by instructions to sail up the Ganges and take Chittagong and by the reluctance of Captain Heath to accept Charnock’s assurance that Chittagong was at the mouth of another river nearly two hundred miles away and strategically quite beside the point. At last the remains of the expedition, with Charnock and his factors on board, fell back in Madras ; now the war began to be waged as it should have been and now the Mogul began to feel the effect of sea power. Sir Josiah’s geography might be shaky but he had a remarkable grasp of the essentials. Here are his comments when Aurangzebe reduced the King of Golconda and moved forward into the Carnatic.

‘The subjects of the Mogul cannot bear a war with the English for twelve months together, without starving and dying

by thousands for want of work to purchase rice ; not singly for want of our trade but because by our war we obstruct their trade with all the Eastern nations, which is ten times as much as ours and all European nations put together. Therefore we conclude Fort St George is now much more worth and secure to us than ever it was in the mean King of Goldconda's time, for he had little at sea for us to revenge ourselves upon, but now if new injuries should be offered us, we have a fat enemy to deal with, from whom something is to be got to bear our charges...'

He was right ; the upshot is told in the minutes of the Fort St. George Council for Monday, October 7th, 1689 and more romantically by Nawab Muhabbat Khan, recounter of the burning-glass story :

'In those days the Emperor Aurangzebe was ...straitened..... for provisions, and his camp was reduced to starvation. Upon this, the Chief of the Factory in the Carnatic sent vessels laden with grain, showing great consideration for the throne...The Emperor was much pleased...and the royal orders were issued, exempting the ships of the Company from custom duties,...and giving permission for the establishment of factories in Bengal...'

Job Charnock came back in triumph and founded a city that was to become one of the largest in the world. He was the rougher kind of Company's servants ; he was not a man of good birth and education like Streynsham Master or Gerald Aungier, nor can he be credited with any foresight or imagination. But he catches the fancy, he sticks in the memory, perhaps from something in the harsh syllables of his name but perhaps more truly because of the silent stubborn obstinacy that seems to have been his strength, as it was his country-men's. Master and the Madras Council wished to make him Second at Hooghly, when



he thought he should be First at Cossimbazar. He said little but stuck to his guns, refused to take over the books at Hooghly for months on end and got his way.

With the same doggedness he refused to pay unjust claims at Patna, defended himself with a few men against the Mogul thousands, endured the ignorance and indecision of Heath. And to his stubbornness he added a touch of the picturesque. Everyone has heard of how he rescued from the flames a Brahman widow of transcendent loveliness, lived with her happily for fourteen years, set up a magnificent tomb over her body and sacrificed a cock there every year on the anniversary of her death. It is not a Brahman practice to sacrifice cocks, but, as the husband of a Brahman widow, Charnock could hardly be expected to be particularly orthodox in his paganism. He died in 1693, having 'reigned more absolutely than a Rajah, only he wanted much of their humanity'.

The seventeenth century ended then with all three Presidencies established. For the Mogul Empire it had been a century of progress or achievement ; Aurangzebe had extended his dominions but his intolerance had hastened the collapse of his dynasty. The English in India, however, might well have looked back with some complacency. In the first years after 1608 they had been a colony of traders, begging for the right to exist in Surat on sufferance ; now the Governor of Madras and Bombay live in regal state with a navy, a standing army, a militia, judges and a mint. The servants of the Company are still mainly concerned with kerseys and calicoes ; it is trade they are after. But already they are experienced in the diplomacy of the East ; they are learning to be administrators in a small way, and every man among them is an occasional soldier.

Gone are the days when they petitioned against the employment of gentlemen and begged that they might be allowed to

consort with those of their own degree. There have been men among them of imagination, foresight and restraint ; in almost any society Oxenden, Aungier and Master would have shone. Others, such as Pitt and Charnock, excel by the force of a stubborn gusto for mastery ; there is a plentiful supply of men with the fierce valour of Sir Edward Winter, James Keigwin or Captain Minchin of the *Revenge*. Idleness and folly no doubt are there in plenty ; and much technical dishonesty, for you will not get incorruptibility for ten pounds a year. But most of it is the sanctioned dishonesty of the East, the commission that does not go beyond what is customary and which no one thinks matter for reproach. It was certainly no worse among the English in India than in Whitehall, where Sir Josiah squared King, Court and Parliament for £ 80,000 and ‘by his great annual presents could command both at Court and Westminster Hall what he pleased’.

They are quarrelsome, no one can deny it ; a hot-tempered, full-blooded generation who eat too much meat for the climate and drink too much arrack punch and too much of the lively flavoursome wines of Spain and the Canaries. But the quarrels vanish and the ranks close when they are faced by Mogul or Portuguese and already they display, when compared with those who surround them, the qualities that are to put this empire in their hands — a stubborn fidelity to each other and, within reasonable commercial limits, to the Company ; an obstinate tenacity of purpose ; discipline ; a preference on the whole for keeping their word. Above all, there is among them a fair number of that rare sub-species of man through whose character shines the sharp blade of decision, the steel of leadership. (Woodruff — MEN WHO RULED INDIA, Vol. I, Chap. VIII)

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# JOB CHARNOCK

By

**G. W. Forrest**

The life of Job Charnock, the founder of the capital of British India, a man of sound judgment, boundless enterprise, and an adamant constancy of purpose, is a story which ought to be of ever-enduring interest to all Englishmen. It reveals the springs of an empire whose progress and growth is a wondrous fact in the history of the world, and it enables us to understand the sort of men who planted settlements and built forts which became the seats of great Governments. Their toils, their sufferings, and their conflicts prepared the way for the dominion of their race in India, and the introduction of peace and prosperity into a vast continent.

It is not the City of Palaces, with its broad streets and spacious squares, not in Bombay, with its huge docks and vast public works, but in the old burials grounds upon the beached verge of the salt flood, overgrown with tall rank grass and studded with tombs, there comes home to us the romance and tragedy of empire. The inmates of these mouldering brick graves were English merchants who lived and died at their work, Englishwomen who were transported by the attraction of love, and children who could not bloom in that malarious air. The story of these pioneers — a marvellous tale of suffering and vicissitude, of heroism and endurance — lies buried in the archives of the Government of India and of the India Office. The first attempt to rescue it from oblivion was made by John Bruce in his 'Annals of the Hon'ble East India Company from their Establishment by the Charter of Elizabeth,

1600, to the Union of the London and English East India Companies, 1707'. It is a work of great industry, of extensive information, and of much accuracy ; but it is in three huge tomes, too much for the ordinary reader. The first five chapters of Mill's 'History of British India' are mainly founded on Bruce, and they deal in the most cursory manner with the history of the early European settlements. The history of the foundation of our power in Bengal is told in a few lines, and the name of Job Charnock is not mentioned. Stewart, the learned historian of Bengal, owes much of his information to the elaborate work of Bruce, but he has supplemented it with some valuable original materials. The first substantial increase to the material gathered by Bruce is due to the wide and protracted research of Sir Henry Yule in the records of the India Office and British Museum. To Bruce and Yule we owe almost all the information we at present possess of the early history of the Company's trade and settlement in Bengal (or "the Bay", as it was commonly styled in the seventeenth century), and of the career and character of Job Charnock, the founder of Calcutta. Sir Henry Yule bestowed upon his task years of labour and the ripe scholarship of a long life ; but his work was fragmentary, and, with the characteristic modesty of a great scholar, he admitted that he had "not been able to scatter all the obscurity nor to substitute authoritative statements for the doubtful ones." Since the publication of 'The Diary of William Hedges', illustrated and illumined by Yule, fresh material has come to light which scatters in some measure the obscurity surrounding the career of Charnock, and dispels the mythological version of the Charnock legend. From Bruce and Yule, and some new materials drawn from the archives of India, we propose to give a consecutive sketch of the career of Job Charnock, — to draw a true portrait of the man whose character was peculiarly English.

The power of the Dutch in the Spice Islands and their increasing enmity led the English to turn their attention to the Indian trade, and to the establishment of factories on the western or Malabar coast and on the east or Coromandel coast. On the east coast they settled first at Masulipatam, at the mouth of the river, Krishna, then the principal port of this part of India, in 1611, and on the western side of India at Surat in the following year. The factors at Masulipatam learnt "that all kinds of provisions for subsisting the Company's factories on the Coromandel coast could be purchased in Bengal, and an indefinite quantity of fine white cloth". On the 22nd of March 1632/3, Master Norris, the agent there, resolved to send two merchants into Bengal for the settling of a factory and six Europeans besides who were then at Masulipatam were to accompany the merchants and carry a present from the agent to the Nabob or king of that country. On the 1st of April they set sail, "and in much various weather, with many difficulties and dangers (which to relate here would be tedious and impertinent to my intended discourse); the twenty-first of April being then Easter-day, we were at anchor in a bay before a town at Harssapoore; it is a town of good strength, with whom our merchants hold commerce with correespondency." At Harssapore, on the Orissa coast, the party hired a house for factory, and whilst some of them remained to build, Mr. Cartwright, one of the merchants, "travelled towards Ballazary" (Balasore), at the mouth of the Hughley estuary, and a small agency was established there. From Balasore the Company's servants made their way round the Gangetic delta, and so up its south-western channel to Hughley, "the principal port of the province, lying about one hundred miles from the sea, on the river to which it gives its name."

Seven-and-twenty years rolled on, and the Company, besides having a small establishment at Hughley, had crept up the river and founded a trading station at Kasimbazar, near Murshedabad, the modern capital of Bengal, containing about 200,000 inhabitants, and farther north at Patna, where two great rivers meet the Ganges, famous for its raw silk, saltpetre, and opium. In 1658 Job Charnock, of whose early career we know but little, was appointed first member of Council at Kassimbazar, with a salary of £ 20. In 1664 he became chief at patna. Eleven years later Job Charnock was offered by the Government of Fort St. George the office of fifth in the Council of Madras, but he is "noe wayes yet satisfyed", and "being almost confident that his Honoble. Employers will not suffer him to be thus neglected and unregarded after his 20 years' service in theire imployment, but afford him his right station". His hon, employers, thinking that Job Charnock had done them "good and faithfull service, and it being his right, "appointed him (3rd January 1679) "to be Chief of Cassumbazar and 2 of Council in the Bay, and consequently to succeed in the Chiefship at the Bay according to our Rules." But Job Charnock could not leave Patna until he had started the saltpetre cargoes, a material much wanted at the time in England, owing to the Civil War, and Masters, Governor and Agent at Madras, deprived him of the appointment. The Court greatly resented this treatment "of our old and good servant, Mr. Job Charnock, who had the right indisputably of succession (as you call it), beside our express order to be chief of Cassumbazar. A person that hath served us faithfully above 20 years, and hath never, as we understand, been prowler for himselfe, beyond what was just and modest: Who therefore, we are resolved, shall not live unrewarded by us". But they twice in succession appointed other men to be chief of the Bay. It was not till August

1685, on the death of the chief agent at Hughley, Job Charnock succeeded him, but the factory at Kasimbazar was boycotted because he had stoutly fought against the exactions and extortions of the native officials, and it was closely watched by soldiers to prevent his leaving. He, however, managed to slip through the cordon, and reached Hughley in April 1686.

The East India Court had now come to the conclusion that if their trade in Bengal, was to prosper, they must shake off the exactions of the Nabob and his officials. To do this they must increase and discipline their troops, and have a fortified settlement. On the 27th January 1685/6 they wrote to our President and Council at Fort St. George :—

“You must not forgett to send to Bengall some of ye bookes of Military discipline & Martiall Law, now in use in his Majtys. Army, & to give them strict orders for keeping all our land officers and soldiers constantly to live & Lodge in Hutts or Barracks within our Fort, according to ye usage of ye modern Garrisons in Europe, and that they may know how the more decently & conveniently to contrive them, we have induced all our Commandrs. and Lieutenants bound for Bengall before theire going to sea to take a view of that regular Fortification of his Majty. ye Block House at Gravesend.”

In a letter written on the 21st December 1683 the Court state that some “of our Captains tell us there is noe way to mend our condition but by seizing and fortifying one of these pleasant islands in the Ganges about the Braces ;” but “some others have propounded to us the seizure a Toune called Chittagong in the easternmost mouth of the River Ganges, upon or near the coast of Rackan (Arakan)”.

The Court at the time did not encourage the latter project, but it seems never to have left their mind ; and two years later, having obtained the permission of James II, they determined to send an expedition to capture Chittagong, a port of considerable importance in the sixteenth century, which was known familiarly to the Portuguese as Porto Grande. Chittagong had belonged to the Moghul Emperor, and the Court wrote, —

“But you must always understand that tho we are prepared for and resolved to enter into a warr with ye Mogull (being necessitated thereunto) our ultimate end is peace, for as we have never done it, soe our natures are averse to bloodshed & Rapine, wch usually attend the most just warrs, but we have noe remedy left, but either to desert our Trade, or we must draw that Sword his Majty. hath Intrusted us wth to vindicate the Rights & Honor of the English Nation in India.”

The fleet sent to “enter into a warr with ye Mogull”, and “to vindicate the Rights & Honor of the English Nation,” was the most formidable armament ever despatched to India, — the *Beaufort* with seventy guns and three hundred seamen, commanded by John Nicholson ; the *Nathaniel*, with fifty guns and a hundred and fifty seamen, commanded by John Mason ; and the *Rochester*, with sixty-five guns ; three “Frygatts so contrived for the Sea that they may as well goe about the Cape as the best ships we have,” armed with twelve guns and manned with twenty seamen. They carried six companies of English soldiers, recruited for the purpose, with subaltern officers, but with no Captains, for the Court wrote, —

“We have appointed noe Capt. of our sixe Compa. of Soldiers, because we resolve to keep to our ancient



well-grounded custome of keeping always our Soldiers under ye Command of our Chiefe and Councill, & therefore we doe appoint, yt our Agent for the time being be always Lieutnt. Gennl. & Commandr in Chiefe of all our Forces by Sea or Land in or near ye provinces of Bengall & Oriza, and in all Seas, Harbours, Creeks, and places near unto those provinces or either of them, & that he be Collonell & Capt. of ye first Company of English Soldiers in Bengall, that ye 2d of our Councill be always Lieutnt. Collonell & Capt. of our 2d Compa. of Foote Soldiers, yt. the 3rd of our Councill, be Major of our Regiment & Capt. of our 3d. Compa, & that all the rest of our Councill, according to their station in Councill, be respectively Capt. of the succeeding Compa. of Foote Soldiers."

Royal commissions were granted by his Majesty to Captain Nicholson and the other commanders, — Nicholson was appointed admiral, and Mason vice-admiral. The fleet was to be joined by the Company's other vessels in Bengal, and orders were to be sent to Madras to despatch to the Bay all the vessels they could spare. Enclosed in the instructions to the Agent was a letter to the Nabob demanding £ 620,000 damages "for this great Fleet and Force" for loss "sustained by his beseidging our trade"; "yett," they add "we are not only soe desirous but fond of peace" that if he would agree "to leave us ye Inheritance of Chettegam and ye small Territories thereunto belonging," they "were willing to relinquish all our forementioned demands and resettle in his Country in our old Factorys & upon our old privileges". If on the arrival of Nicholson the Nabob had not agreed to these hard terms, they were to proceed "with all yor forces to Chyttegam both by Sea and land and take ye Towne."

But if "ye said Towne or Fort was peaceable delivered," they were to give the inhabitants "faire Quartr, and not to kill any of them or to take anything from them, but to suffer them to remaine in their owne houses".

"You are to allow ye Natives ye liberty of their severall Religions as these Subjects to ye Compa. have at Fort St. George. Above all things we would have you very carefull and noe Violence or Injury be offered to women, children, or any innocent people, that doe not hastily oppose you, & particularly that you suffer noe prejudice to be done to Churches, Pagodas, or other public places where God is worshipped or said to be worshipped."

From the day on which it assailed the fleet was pursued by misfortune. The winds were unpropitious, and detained them. When they set out to sea a storm dispersed them. A vessell was lost, and two of the largest ships, having a very considerable number of the troops on board, could not make the passage. It was not till October 1686 that the *Rochester* and her frigate anchored at the mouth of the Hughley. They had a hundred and eight men on board, who were sent up the rivers in small vessels to the English factory. The *Beaufort* and her frigate with two hundred men arrived soon afterwards. The arrival of these ships with troops roused the fear and anger of the Nabob. On the 24th of November 1686 Job Charnock and his Council wrote to Surat, "The arrivall of our Forces (tho Small) soe alarmed the country" that the Viceroy "ordered doune for the guard of this towne two or three hundred horses & three or four thousand foot." The local Governor now "became very insolent in denying us all manner of necessaries for trade and forbidding us Victualls in the Buzar to prevent our Souldiers resorting

thither." On the 28th of October three Soldiers went out to purchase "Victualls in the morning" and news reached the factory "that two Englishmen were sett upon by the Governors Peons (guards), desperately cut and wounded, and lying dying in the Highway." Charnock immediately sent Captain in Leshlie with a company of soldiers "to bring in their bodies dead or alive but to offer violence to noe man except they were assaulted." They were attacked on their way by a body of the Nabob's horse and foot, whom they repulsed, killing and wounding seven. The inhabitants took alarm, and set fire to the house near the English quarters, and the old factory was burnt. "At the same time they began to display their great gunns from a battery consisting of Eleven Gunns that they had lately raised to command our Shipps in the Hole." Charnock immediately summoned reinforcements from Chandernagore "three miles from towne," and sent a detachment under Captain Richardson to attack the battery. They had to retire with the loss of many wounded, —

"Whereupon Capt. Arthburtnot (Arbuthnot) went out with a fresh recruite, made an assault upon the battery, took it and maintained it while they spiked and dismounted all the gunns, carried the battle on beyond the Governor's House, burneing and driveing all before them, upon which, it was reported, the Governor himselfe fledd in disguise by Water — leaveing the towne in this desolated condition."

Thus for the first time it was proved in Bengal that numerical superiority was of no avail against the courage and discipline of English troops. "The skirmish we have had with the Government," writes Charnock, "mightily startles them, & has made them mightily afraid of us. The Nabob knows not what to thinke of it." The Nabob showed what he thought by

directing all the English factories in Bengal to be seized, the factors to be made prisoners, and a large body of troops to be despatched to Hughley. Charnock's garrison did "not number 400 fighting men," and the shallows in the river prevented large ships from coming up to his protection. The Court had given repeated instructions that a spot nearer the sea and more defensible should be found for their establishment, and Charnock now determined to comply with their wishes. On the 31st of December 1686 he wrote to Sir John Child, General, and Council at Surat : "On the 20th instant we all withdrew & left Hugly, bringing off all the Rt. Honble. Company's concerns and our own. Our coming off was very Peaceable, and no less Honourable, having (as formerly advised) continued the Cessation of arms on both sides hitherto, for the conveniency of getting of the Rt. Honble. Company's estate." Charnock's letter was addressed from Chuttanuttea. The site of future empire was occupied by three hamlets, the chief of which was Chuttanuttea (literally Satanati Hat, Cotton Thread Mart); the other two were Kalikat (= Calcutta) and Govindpur, where the present Fort William stands. It was situated on the east bank of a reach of the river, about seventy miles from the sea, and accessible at high tide to heavily armed ships. Charnock proceeded to erect some huts as temporary residences, and began to negotiate with the Viceroy's agent for permission to build a factory; but the Viceroy did not forget the skirmish at Hughley, and sent an army to destroy the rising settlement. "The country all up in armes round us," wrote Charnock, "and without any hope of peace or further treaties about it, Warr broke forth;" and the English having burnt down "the King's salt houses" and captured his "ffort at Tanna" on the right bank of the river below Satanati, sailed seventy miles farther

down the river to Hijili, a low, flat, island separated from the mainland by a narrow channel. They placed their

“small shipping at severall stations round the Island to hinder the Enimies landing, in the most probable places, and also began to raise breastworks & to Digg trenches round our main Forte, which was but ffalcely so Tearmed, it being but a small weake house and a thinn wall about it, with 2 or 3 points, not nigh so strong as our ffactory at Hughley, and Scituated among a Grove of Trees and a Thick Towne of mudd houses about 500 (yards) distant from the Water Side where was raised a battery of Gunns. The upper Fort had Gunns also mounted where they Could doe Service.”

The Viceroy's army of 12,000 men followed Charnock and his small band, at once erected batteries where the channel was narrowest,

“thereby so Annoying our Shipping that they placed every Shot, & our men, Souldiers, Sailors, and others ffell doune every day sick of the Generall Distemper of the Island, Feavour and Ague, which was by this time Epidemeicall, so that we had buried almost 200 men of all sorts and Scarce 100 men remained to keepe the Fort and those very weake.”

On May 28. 1687, the besiegers landed “700 Horsemen and 200 Gunnmen”, and capturing a battery, marched “with their forces & our ffeild-peeces to the maine Forte in the Towne”. They arrived as soon as “our Intelligences,” and surprised Lieut. Richard Frances, his wife, and child, who were sick in a house in the town. “Himm they cutt in Peeces, his wife & child they Carryed away Prisoners.” The enemy seized the outer trenches, and all that night a fierce fight raged, but “the Mogull's Courage, as their Nature is, going out of them with their Bang

(opium); Next morning were soon ffeazed (harassed) out from thence." The condition of the garrison was most desperate "by reason of sickness and death, not having but one officer, of 6 Lieuts. and 8 Ensigns, to command under his Worshipp at that time in the Fort, and of 26 Sergeants and Corporalls, not above 4 alive and all to do duty." The Admiral's ship sprung another "desperate Great Leake," and "not one of the others was half manned". If Charnock surrendered the fort the Company's ships expected from home would be lost. He held out the next day, "nothwithstanding they Landed a great many more men upon us and battered us with their field-peeeces, and beseidged us 3/4 round". A flat-roofed masonry house on which Job Charnock had planted two guns and a guard prevented a complete investment. It stopd half-way to the water-side, and by holding it, and a battery of two guns at the landing-place, the garrison kept that passage to their shipping open, and were able to procure ammunition and provision.

All that day and the next night the firing continued on both sides. Heavy rain fell during the night, "which with constant duty much disabled our men." A great many had to be sent aboard, and the small shipping that kept guard round the island were ordered into the river to be ready to receive the scanty remnant. One of them, the *Revenge*, grounded upon a sandbank by the way, and the vessel was deserted by her crew and possessed by the enemy. But in face of all trials and misfortunes Job Charnock and his gallant band held out. Four days drove on, the garrison "growing very thinn, not having above 100 fighting men in it and the 2 Batteryes". On the 1st of June the sentinels on the ramparts saw the sails of a ship from Europe coming up the Hughley, and the garrison received a recruit of seventy men, "who cheerefully sallied out the Next

Day, and beate the Enemy from their Gunns, burning their houses & returned with the Loss of a Manne”.

On the 3rd of June Job Charnock resorted to a bold and clever strategem. He dropped all the sailors out of the Fort by one and two at a time to the under battery at the water-side—“when being all drawne up in arms, marched up to the Fort with Drums beating and Trumpetts Sounding and the men huzaing as two daies before”. The garrison lost about 16 men, the enemy “a very greate number.” Thinking that Charnock was supplied with constant recruits from the shipping, the enemy “grew Dull upon it,” and “on the next day in the morning, being the 6th day, held forth a flagg of Truce in order to a Treaty.” After three days’ negotiations a treaty was signed. On the 11th day Job Charnock having given the Mogul commander “full possession,” went forth “with our Ammunition and Artillery, drums beating and Colours flying.” So ended the siege of Hijili. It lasted only a few days, but it displayed all the patience, courage, and stubbornness of resolution of our race. In “that direful place” many died, and great numbers fell afterwards victims to the disease they contracted there. “Wee have buried”, wrote Job Charnock, “the Last Yeare from the Shipps and the Millitary nigh 500 men, amongst which are 14 of the Rt. Honoble. Company’s Servants and 6 women. Of 6 Lieutenants only 2 Left, and those miraculously recovered—8 Ensigns fell, 10 Sergeants and about as many Corporalls, with 250 Sentinells and as many Seamen ; and very few or Scarce any that Escaped a fitt of Sickness upon that infected Island”. So our Indian Empire was built.

And now, peace having been established, Charnock spread his sails, and once more held his course up the Hughley. He

dare not return to Chuttanuttea, so he cast anchor at Ulabarea, sixteen miles below it. He obtained permission to remain there, and began making docks for careening his ships; but after remaining there three months he found it not suited to the inland trade, and returned to Chuttanuttea about November 1687. Here he and his factors lived for about a year. On the 27th of June 1688 Charnock wrote to the Governor of Fort St. George and the city of Madras, —

“Wee are in great hopes of obtaining Chuttanuttee to settle in with three or four other adjacent townes which doubtless may be in some years so improved as to be very profitable to the Right. Honoble Compa. & possibly may be gradually improved to a considerable strength; for when once we came to be settled thoroughly, the country people will flock to us to live under our Government, the nature of which they are well acquainted with, and soe a vast disparity between the lenity of ours and the tyranny of their own, of the which we have a pregnant instance in their present flocking to us such abundance as they dayly do. Wee have been as carefull in providing such lodgings and conveniences for the Rt. Honoble compas. servants as our emergencies would permit; but it could not be expected that they should be extraordinary, when we ware continually camping and discamping. They have such allowances as are necessary for the building themselves thatched houses for the present, till such time as we shall hear our Rt. Honoble Masters’ pleasure concerning buildings must be demolished, so that we retrench our expenses as far as possible, tho’ to the suffering some present inconveniences.”

Orme, the most careful of Indian historians, states that “the Nabob of Bengal paid no regard to the treaty made at Ingelee



(Hijili), but gave up the English trade to the rapine of his officers, and at the same time demanded a very large sum, as a recompense for the damage which his country had sustained by the late hostilities. Charnock being neither in a condition to oppose him by arms nor to appease him with money, sent two members of the Council to Dacca, to try if he might be softened by submissions." Charnock, in his letter of 27th June, however, states that the new Nabob had arrived, and was seated "at his residency at Dacca," and on his way he sent an order to the agent to send up an Englishman, "upon which we sent up Mr. Charles Eyre and Mr. Roger Braddyll." The Nabob, he adds, "was very civill to them, and had referred the matter to the Governor of Hugly, but he looks very high, expecting an extraordinary present for the Nabob. We shall in a few daye see more plainly how matters are like goe." Three days later Job Charnock wrote, "We doubt not but our Honoble, &C., will be much effected with our condition. God knows how matters will go." The Nabob's representative pressed the two members of Council hard that they should give an answer to three demands — first, that for making war upon the King's country they should pay a fine of two lakhs; secondly, that they should restore all things taken during the war; thirdly, "that we live futurely in the King's like merchants and subjects."

"The two former we answered with a petition for redress of grievances, and respit 20 mts. until we could have an answer from Madras unto their demands. Unto the last we answered that untill our own security obliged us to defend ourselves we had lived peaceably, and patiently passed by many oppressions. We could live accordingly to the contract that should be concluded. But we came into the country upon conditions, and not simply to submit unto their laws and customes."

While the negotiations were being conducted at Dacca there arrived (September 1688) the *Defence*, 64-gun ship, commanded by Captain Heath, accompanied by a small frigate having on board one hundred and sixty soldiers. Heath had positive orders "that in case our Servants in the Bay have not already fortified themselves in some considerable place," they were "to prepare to come on board our ships in three days time," and he was to proceed with them against Chittagong. Heath had an extraordinary commission, which superseded Charnock in his chief command of the forces in the Bay. Charnock objected to leaving his rising settlement, and he knew that the attack on Chittagong was a vain adventure ; but the old sailor exercised his authority, and ordered all the Company's servants to embark on board the fleet, and on the 8th of November he proceeded down the river to Balasore. After sacking and burning that town he set sail for Chittagong. But Heath found the works stronger than he expected, and 10,000 men ready to defend. After a month of fruitless negotiations with the native Governor, he abandoned the enterprise, and on the 17th of February he set sail for Fort St. George, "giving orders for every ship to make the best of her way."

At Madras Job Charnock remained fifteen months. In January 1690 Aurangzeb, the Great Moghul, finding how important the commerce of the Company was to the wealth and prosperity of his empire, and that the Company's cruisers prevented pilgrims from going to Mecca, authorised his representative to make peace with Sir John Child, the Governor of Bombay and Director-General of the Company's settlements. On the 18th of February the President of Fort St. George wrote to the Court, "For confidence whereof (i.e., of peace) we are resolving to send downe Agent Charnock to Bengall to the Bay

upon the Princess when she arrives, .., which we are the more encouraged to by the kind invitation of the now worthy good Nabob Ebrahim Cawne." On the arrival of the *Princess*, Charnock with his Council and factors, accompanied by an officer and thirty soldiers, went on board, and on Sunday the 24th of August, at noon, she anchored off Chuttanuttea. From the deck of a giant steamer as she anchors off Calcutta a noble prospect now meets the eye, which is the delight of visitors from all quarters of the globe. Vessels of all sizes and descriptions gliding over its waters animate the vast river with varied life. Stately ships lie at anchor by the bank, and their lofty spars tower up black into the air. In the far distance, beyond a wide green plain, rises into sight tower and dome and spire of the 'City of Palaces. Charnock saw from his small vessel a different scene. A stretch of rising ground along the river, with mat-covered lodges strewn around: beyond it all a vast green, malarious swamp, girded like a mighty hedge by a dense jungle. Job Charnock found the place in a deplorable condition, "nothing being left for our present accommodation, and the rain falling day and night. We are forced to betake ourselves to boats, which, considering the season of the year, is unhealthy." On Thursday, the 28th August, at a consulation,—

“ *Present* — The Rt. Worshipful Agent Charnock, Mr. Francis Ellis, Mr. Jere. Peachie. In consideration that all the former buildings here are destroyed, it is resolved that such places be built as necessity requires and as cheap as possible — viz., 1, A warehouse; 2, A dining-room; 3, The Secretary's Office to be repaired; 4, A room to sort cloth in; 5, A cook-room with its conveniences; 6, An apartment for the Company's servants; 7, The Agents and Mr. Peachie's house to be repaired, which were

part standing, and a house to be built for Mr. Ellis, the latter being totally demolished ; 8, The guard-house. These being done with mudd walls and thatched till we can get ground whereon to build a factory."

The mud huts rose, the swamp around was reclaimed, the jungle was cleared away, but many succumbed to the cruel fever. The growth of the infant settlement was slow, and accompanied by much suffering. Nine months after its birth the President at Fort. St. George wrote that "they were in a wild, unsettled condition at Chuttinuttee, neither fortified houses nor goedowns, only tents, hutts, and boats, with a strange charge of near 100 soldiers, guardships, &c." The Nawab of Bengal would "neither permit building or Factory, nor merchants to settle or trade with them." But Job Charnock, the Madras President complains, "continues contrary to all reason or consent of the Government." It is by "divine madness," contrary to all reason or consent of Government, that empires are made. Charnock's far sight saw that it needed only courage and perseverance to make the enterprise a success. But the whole weight of the task fell on the sturdy old man, who had served thirty eight years in India, and the burden proved too heavy. He fell into deep dejection, and during his last years his stubborn will was no longer a law to his followers. His race of glory run and race of shame, on the 10th of January 1693 Job Charnock was with them at rest. He had lived a strenuous life, and it was enough for him that he had fulfilled his work. He knew not that he had accomplished a great result. It is the lot of the pioneer to plough and to sow, and for others to reap. Job Charnock was no mere money-making trader, no wild daring speculator, but an old English merchant, with the high character, calm judgment, and cool courage of his order. He

felt responsible for the merchandise and credit of his Honble. Masters. He was, they said, "always a faithful man to the Company." He also had the far sight of the world-merchant, and having found the best place for transportation, he with a persistent hardihood planted a settlement there which became a hive of industry and the capital of an empire.

They buried him in an enclosure where many of his fever-stricken comrades lay. In the next century the old burying-ground became the Churchyard of St. John's, for many years the Cathedral of Bengal, and a massive old mausoleum, octagonal in form, with a double dome, erected by his son-in-law, Sir Charles Eyre, the first President of Bengal, marks the spot where lies the body of Charnock, or Channock, as Hamilton calls him. Captain Hamilton, "who left England before King William came into it as king," in his 'New Account of the East Indies', relates the story how the founder of Calcutta rescued his wife from a funeral pyre. He writes ;—

"The country being overspread with paganism, the custom of wives burning with their deceased husbands is also practised here. Before the Moghul's war Mr. Charnock went one time with his ordinary guard of soldiers to see a young widow at that tragical catastrophe ; but he was so smitten with the widow's beauty that he sent his guards to take her by force from her executioners and conduct her to his own lodgings. They lived lovingly many years, and had several children. At length she died after he had settled in Calcutta ; but instead of converting her to Christianity she made him a Proselyte to Paganism, and the only part of Christianity that was remarkable in him was burying her decently, and he built a Tomb over her, where all his Life

after her Death he kept the anniversary Day of her Death by sacrificing a Cock on her Tomb after the Pagan manner. This was and is the common Report, and I have been credibly informed both by Christians and Pagans who lived at Calcutta under his Agency that the story was really Matter of Fact."

As Sir Henry Yule points out, it is not likely that a European at Patna or elsewhere in India could have ventured in those days to abduct a *Sati* from the pyre. As to the Hindu lady having made him a proselyte to paganism, this is rendered improbable by the discovery made by Mrs. Penny (the author of a short history of Fort St. George) in the baptismal register book of St. Mary's Church, Madras: "August 19th, 1689. Charnock, Mary, Elizabeth, and Katherine, daughters of Job Charnock, baptised by J. Evans. Francis Ellis, Godfather; Ann Seaton and Margery Heathfield, Godmothers." J. Evans, the chaplain, was with Charnock at Hughley, and was one of the party carried away by Heath and landed at Madras. He was "Merchant-Parson," and, returning to England with his wealth, was preferred to the see of Bangor, and translated thence to Armagh. Mrs. Seaton was the wife of Captain Francis Seaton, who commanded the garrison.

To his three daughters, as we gather from his will, Job Charnock left the small fortune which he had made after thirty-eight years' service.

"Date, 9th Janu. 1692. Will of Job Charnock at present Agent for affairs of the Right Honble English East India Company in Bengall.

"To my beloved ffriened Daniel Sheldon Esquire £ 70 as a Legacy to buy him a Ring. To the Honble. Nath.

Higginson to buy him a Ring 500 Rups. To Mr. John Beard to buy a Ring 400 Rups. To Mr. John Hill to buy a Ring 200 Rups. To Mr. Francis Ellis to buy a Ring 150 Rups. The Honble. Nath. Higginson, President of Madrass and Mr. John Beard of Council in Bengall to be Overseers of this my will. To the poor of the parish of Cree Church, London, £ 50. To Bulydasse 100 Rups. and the meanest sort of my son's Cloathes (*sic*) lately deceased. All my whole estate in India and elsewhere to be equally given and distributed to my three daughters, Mary, Elizabeth, and Katherine, with this reservation that as in addicion to my daughter Mary's porcon there shall be payed her out of my daughters Elizth. and Katherine's two-thirds £ 600 sterl. I desire my overseers that my three daughters be sent with a convenient handsome Equipage for England and recogmended to the care of my well-beloved friend Daniell Sheliton Esquire in London, and that their Estates be invested in goods proper for Europe.

"I acquit Mr. Charles Pate from his debt to me of fifty Pagodas lent him at the fort. I will and ordain the honble. Daniell Sheldon and my eldest daughter Mary Charnock to be executors.

"Witnd. Jonathan White—Francis Houghton—John Hill 12 June 1695, Commrs. to Robert Dorrell, Attorney deputed by Mary Charnock (now at Bengall in the East Indies) the natural and lawfull daughter and one of the Executors named in the Will of Job Charnock late of Bengall afsd. dec. to admr. during the absence and to the use of said Mary Charnock — Daniel Sheldon the other Exor. having renounced."

The tone of tenderness and considerate affection which runs through the testament places the obdurate old pioneer's character in a new light. We shall not stop to canvass the charge of cruelty brought against him by Hamilton, an interloper who hated the Company's servants for checking his illicit trade, and slandered them ; nor the stories told by his ungenerous successor of his last years, when his vigour and faculties had declined. He had, no doubt, the faults born of unrestricted power and isolated stations of command. But his career attests that Job Charnock was a valiant and true servant, who for the good of his country set at nought all risks and sufferings. By working in the same spirit, his countrymen have won for England a vast and a stable dominion. (*Courtesy ; BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, June 1902, Pp 770-782*).



# JOB CHARNOCK FOUNDS CALCUTTA

By

**Arnold Wright**

In following Thomas Pitt's career we have drifted somewhat from the main channel of the narrative which before he was introduced upon the scene was flowing irregularly through the plains of Bengal. When we return to the course it is to find that little real progress had been made by the Company in the way of the establishment of a permanent settlement in that quarter. For years the vain attempt had been made to conduct trade from factories which were mere glorified warehouses existing by the goodwill of the native authorities. In the absence of any proper status the English were treated with scant courtesy at almost all times and not infrequently with actual injustice. Protests made against oppressive exactions of local officials were either disregarded altogether or contemptuously dealt with. In fine, the Company were at the mercy of every capricious wind that blew in India at a time when the conditions of government were continually changing. They had also to suffer from arrogance of the Dutch who with a superior force at their disposal were able to take up a high line and harass their rivals with impunity.

Gradually but surely the lesson was driven home to the reluctant minds of the Directors that if they were ever to succeed in creating a successful trade in Bengal they must have a forti-

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\*From **EARLY ENGLISH ADVENTURERS IN THE EAST** by Arnold Wright. London, Andrew, Melrose Ltd., 3 York Street, Covent Garden, 1914, pp 290-308.

fied base. In 1686 they took exceptional measures to give effect to this policy. In that year they sent out to India a strong expedition which was charged with the duty of exacting satisfaction for wrongs inflicted by the Mogul Government. Failing redress from the Nabob of Dacca the force was to proceed to Chittagong and "seize and take the said town, fort and territory by force of arms". After capture the place was to be made as safe "as the art of invention of man can extend to". It was finally directed that Mr. Job Charnock was to be "Governor of our fort, town and territory of Chyttegam".

Job Charnock, who was thus assigned the post of honour in this enterprise, was a man of very remarkable personality who fills a great place in the early history of India. His parentage is obscure, but it may, perhaps, be surmised from his name that he came of the same Puritan stock which furnished so many of the earlier officials of the Company. He landed in India in either 1655 or 1656 and served his apprenticeship as a Junior Member of the Council of Cassimbazar, a much less important position than the high-sounding title would imply. Early in 1664 Charnock obtained his first important appointment as Chief of the factory which the Company had established at Patna. In this position he remained continuously for sixteen years. He married a native wife and adopted native modes of living. It was even whispered by his enemies that he had become a pervert to Paganism and sacrificed regularly at the Hindu shrines. The allegation was probably false, but unquestionably Charnock had by long residence in isolation at Patna become completely immersed in Indian customs. Such a man was not ill-qualified to conduct negotiations with native powers where an intimate knowledge of the vernacular and of the native habits of thought was all important. There was nothing, however, in his

previous history to warrant the supposition that he would make a successful man of action. It might even be imagined that his long life of comparative retirement in India had warped these qualities which are most put to the test in a physical struggle. But Charnock, as the sequel will show, was no decadent Englishman with fibres sapped by an enervating Orientalism. He played his part in the great Indian stage with the best and most energetic of his fellow pioneers.

When the crisis came in 1684 Charnock was at Hooghly, whither he had escaped with difficulty from Patna, out of the clutches of the Nabob who was intent in wringing from him an amount unjustly claimed to be due from the Company. The Agent, on entering into his own, at once set about making his dispositions to meet the coming storm. Before the year had expired three ships had come out, large vessels, one of seventy, another of sixty-five and the other of fifty guns, carrying some six hundred seamen. There was in addition a number of small craft including three frigates each equipped with twelve guns and manned by twenty seamen. With the fleet arrived a military force of three or four hundred men formed into companies on the model of the King's troops. The strength of the forces at Charnock's disposal was completed by a number of Portuguese and Rajput soldiers, the former of little account as fighters and the latter lacking the necessary discipline to make them really serviceable.

These preparations aroused the native officials to action. Troops were hurried up from all quarters to overawe these audacious Englishmen who had shown a disposition to challenge the mighty Mogul authority. A battery of eleven guns was erected to command the anchorage, and the settlement was

placed in a condition of blockade by the issue of an edict prohibiting the sale to its inhabitants of any supplies.

It only needed a little incident to bring about a condition of actual warfare. This was supplied one day towards the end of October when three English soldiers on proceeding to the market were beaten, bound and carried off prisoners. Charnock sent out a company of infantry to avenge the insult and bring back the prisoners. The sally was expected and as soon as the men emerged from the shelter of the settlement they were assailed on all sides by large bodies of horse and foot soldiers. They stood their ground for a time, but eventually had to retreat with a loss of seven of their number killed or wounded,

Encouraged by their success the natives set fire to the hovels surrounding the settlement and commenced a vigorous bombardment of the ships at anchor. Charnock ordered up a body of English troops stationed at Chandernagor to strengthen his force for an emergency which he perceived would require all his resources to deal with. Unfortunately before these arrived another reverse had been sustained in an attempt to capture the enemy's battery. The reinforcements, however, speedily changed the aspect of affairs. A fresh attack on the battery made by the new arrivals, under the command of Captain Arbuthnot, was completely successful. The enemy's guns were taken and disabled and sweeping onwards the victorious contingent penetrated as far as the house of the Governor who incontinently fled. Subsequently, the town was bombarded by the ships in the river and sacked by landing parties sent ashore for that purpose. Before the hand of the avenger was stayed some sixty of the enemy had been killed, including three men of note and a good part of the town had been laid in ruins.

The punishment inflicted brought the native officials to a reasonable state of mind. Through the Dutch, who had a settlement in the vicinity, the Governor sued for peace. His overtures were promptly accepted by Charnock, who was glad of the opportunity which the armistice offered of carrying out a long—formed intention to withdraw from Hooghly to some convenient and defensible spot. He at once proceeded to carry out his plans for the evacuation, but in the absence of proper transport facilities the operations dragged and it was not until the end of the year that the last consignment was dispatched and the Englishmen were able to congratulate themselves on having effected a peaceable and honourable retreat in circumstances which promised an accommodation of all differences.

Charnock and his associates relied a little too much upon the effect of their masterly turning of the tables upon the enemy at Hooghly. Though they had put a wholesome fear into the mind of the local Governor their action had a totally different effect upon Shayista Khan, the Nabob of Dacca, the Supreme Mughal authority in these parts. Shayista Khan was greatly incensed, as perhaps was only natural, when he heard of the doings of the insolent foreigners. He collected from all quarters troops with the determination of driving the English out of Bengal. To conceal his plans and gain time he affected to be desirous of concluding a permanent arrangement. He encouraged Charnock to formulate his demands. The Agent utilized the opportunity to elaborate a comprehensive list of claims. He asked for a site for a fort, for permission to establish a mint and to conduct trade free of customs. In addition the native Government was to rebuild at its own cost the Company's factory, restore all the money it had appropriated and assist to recover the Company's debts.

A suspiciously prompt assent was given locally to all these demands. Indeed, it seemed that the only thing wanting to complete the treaty was its formal ratification by the Nabob and the Emperor. But the time at last came for the native authorities to throw off the mask and then Charnock was left in no doubt as to how matters stood. He received back the treaty unsigned with an uncompromising declaration of war, phrased in language of indignation at the effrontery of the English in preferring such demands.

Accepting the challenge Charnock promptly took the initiative in the struggle by burning down the King's salt houses on the banks of the river and attacking and capturing the forts at what is now Garden Reach. After evacuation of Hooghly the English headquarters had been temporarily established at Sutanuti, a spot which today constitutes the northern quarter of Calcutta. This position was now abandoned for one lower down the river on the island of Hijili, which was thought to offer a better prospect of making a successful stand. Here Charnock concentrated his forces, using the fort which he had seized from the Mogul garrison as his new headquarters. When all possible prospective measures had been taken there was a good deal of room left for anxiety. The fort was a flimsy structure standing amidst a grove of trees and situated some five hundred yards from the nearest landing-place, the defence of which had to be entrusted to a specially constructed battery. Altogether only 420 soldiers were available for garrison purposes, though the *Beaufort*, one of the largest ships of the fleet, with its frigate were at hand to render valuable aid in preventing communication between the island and the mainland, and two other ships of the fleet were at Balasore with a considerable additional contingent.

It was at the latter place that the first serious move in the new campaign was made. A force of one hundred and seventy men landed from the ships, attacked and captured the Mogul fort which commanded the river, and the next day marched to the town of Balasore, which they sacked and fired. The English rounded off their operations by seizing two Mogul ships which, inopportunately for their owners, came into port. The only incident to cloud a brilliant piece of work was the surprise and capture of a boat's crew of seventeen who had incautiously gone too far up the river. Of the entire crew only one escaped. The heads of several of the less fortunate subsequently adorned poles in Hooghly, immediately to the gratification of the impoverished inhabitants of that ruined town.

At Hijili, the English garrison soon began to realise the truth that more soldiers die by disease than by the weapons of war. A low-lying pestilential spot, it was about the worst situation that could have been selected for an encampment of the English soldiers, most of whom were fresh from home. Disease quickly appeared in their ranks, and as the hot months came on, it worked such frightful havoc that the proportion of sick was never less than a third. Meanwhile the Mogul forces had been steadily accumulating on the mainland opposite the island. They had erected there a battery which enabled them to dominate the river and even threaten the fort.

Action had to be taken if the island was not to be made altogether untenable. A series of raids were consequently organized with the object of harassing the enemy and giving the men a little wholesome excitement. Though they were uniformly successful the overwhelming number of the enemy enabled them to make good all damage that was done. When one battery was destroyed, another and heavier one was established.

In May the arrival of the Nabob's general with twelve thousand fresh troops was the signal for a more vigorous effort to overwhelm English. New batteries were erected along the river and a constant fire from them was kept up. The range was good, and under the harassing effect of the bombardment, combined with the natural depression engendered by heat and disease, the spirit of the garrison fell to zero.

Becoming more audacious with the absence of any initiative on the side of the besieged the Moguls landed a force of several hundred cavalry and artillery on the island, captured an unfinished battery, killed one of the English officers who was sick and carried off his wife and child into captivity. They would assuredly have captured the fort if the English had not rallied and after a desperate fight driven the assailants off. But though victory was temporarily won, the general situation was blacker than ever. Charnock had buried half his men, and of the other half only one hundred were fit for duty. Of the forty officers who had originally been of the expedition actually only one remained at his post.

Charnock, surveying the situation with the eye of an intelligent though amateur strategist, came to the conclusion that a move must be made to protect the approach to the landing place if absolute disaster was to be avoided. A suitable position existed in a solidly constructed building about half way to the landing stage which he had used as a battery. This post, together with the one at the landing place, was strengthened by the calling in of the small vessels which had been posted around the island. With the additional men obtained from the shipping Charnock maintained a gallant fight against the Mogul troops which were besieging the fort. He succeeded in



keeping the enemy at a respectful distance, but whether unaided he could have maintained the unequal struggle for any lengthened period is doubtful, having regard to the steady depletion of his forces by disease.

Happily for him, happily for the cause of which he was the faithful champion, at the critical moment there appeared on the scene a welcome reinforcement of men in a ship which had arrived from Europe. This detachment numbered only seventy, but it brought with it all the vigour and dash of the West and a confidence in race which had lost one of its pristine freshness.

The effect produced by the new arrivals on the garrison was marvellous. Their war faces glowed with a new hope as they dragged their emaciated frames to the outside of the fort to see their comrades from home marching up from the boats in all the panoply of military state. If it had been a division which had arrived instead of a weak company a greater stir could not have been created.

Charnock, witnessing the scene like the rest with a feeling of intense gratification, was seized with a happy thought. Why should this enthusiasm be allowed to evaporate? Why not repeat the landing for the edification of the enemy, as well as for their own satisfaction? The idea was no sooner conceived than acted upon. By his orders the men who had disembarked quietly dropped by twos and threes back to the landing place, and when they had all re-assembled these marched again to the fort with flags flying and drums beating to the cheers of the garrison, which were as lustily raised as on the first occasion. This process again and again repeated kept the place for the greater part of the day in a feverish state of animation.

The trick worked admirably. The Mogul commander deceived into the belief that the English garrison had been strongly reinforced, a day or two later sent a flag of truce to treat for peace. Charnock was naturally delighted to accept the olive branch, and by June 10, 1687 terms had been arranged which left the English free to march out with all the honours of war.

It had been a wonderful fight. For three months this handful of Englishmen had kept at bay an army and had done that while they held a position which had many and serious disadvantages. Outwardly little was accomplished as far as the main object of the expedition was concerned, but it does not admit of question that the courageous stand made on this occasion by Charnock infused into the mind of the native authorities a healthy respect for the prowess of the English which ultimately bore such fruit.

From Hijili the English went to Uluberia for three months, and at the expiration of that time once more established themselves at Sutanati ; Charnock selected the latter spot with the definite intention of making it the permanent seat of the Company's power. What were the reasons which animated him his choice we do not know, but as Mr. C. R. Wilson points out in his admirable work, *The Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, it possessed valuable strategic qualities. "It could only be approached on one side. To attack it the Mogul troops must cross the river higher up and march down upon it from the North. But if the river were crossed while the English ships still dominated it, the attacking force was exposed to swift and certain destruction. The English, sending their troops up the stream, could land and assail the enemy on his march to Calcutta,

cut him off from his base, force him to form front parallel to his line of communication and so place him in the most dangerous predicament in which an army can find itself.’

History has abundantly vindicated the choice of the site of what was for so long the capital of India and what is still today its most important commercial centre. But no credit for the choice rests with those who were in authority at home. Indeed, if the short-sighted directors who ruled the East India Company at this period could have had their way there would have been no Calcutta and very possibly no British domination in Bengal. They had for some reason or other formed a strong prejudice in favour of Chittagong, a place remote from the real seat of authority and of trade in Bengal, and when they heard of Charnock's proceedings they assailed him with a bitterness of invective more appropriate to a criminal than to an official who had risked his life and health in a gallant and not unsuccessful attempt to advance the Company's interests.

Charnock was not only abused ; he was superseded. The Court sent out a fresh expedition with a new commander in the person of Captain Wm. Heath, an able navigator but a man utterly unversed in Indian ways and totally unfit by temperament for the delicate work of diplomacy which must accompany and follow any action that was to be taken.

Heath arrived at Sutanuti, or as we may now call it Calcutta, in September 1688, and immediately proceeded to call a Council to deliberate on the position. There were reasons and even authority in the court's own communications for remaining at Calcutta ; but the impetuous sailor, having made up his mind that the site was a bad one, over-ruled local opinion and by virtue of his instructions issued what were practically orders for

the evacuation of the settlement. He subsequently changed his mind to some extent by opening up negotiations with Bahadur Khan, who had succeeded Shayista Khan as the Nabob of the province. His overtures, made through two English representatives under Charnock's skilful advice and direction, were not unfavourably received, but before any definite result could be reached Heath had reverted to his old idea of seeking a new site for a settlement.

Early in November, the whole of the establishment having been embarked, the long prosecuted quest assumed a new phase. Heath, who was "everything by turns, and nothing long", had only a vague idea what he really wanted to do. His first move, delayed until towards the end of November, was to make an attack on the Mogul camp at Balasore. The action was attended with the usual success, but the troops stained their victory by excesses committed in the town against Christian and non-Christian, friend and enemy, alike. Nothing much came of the affair save that the lives of the English factors, who had been imprisoned and taken up country on the landing from the ships, were placed in jeopardy. A letter received at this juncture from the Company's representatives at Dacca announcing that the Nabob was favourable to their proposals brought the policy of negotiation once more into the ascendant. But by the end of the year Heath was again on the war path. His objective this time was Chittagong. There had been some question earlier of the English helping the Moguls in a war which they were waging against the King of Arakan, and on the arrival of his fleet off the port Heath sounded local authorities on the point. Finding that there was no desire locally to enlist his fleet and the English commander turned his thoughts to an attack on the town. A cool survey of the situation, however, brought home to him the

extreme risks which would attend such an enterprise. Next his restless mind swung round to the idea that the King of Arakan might be used as a stalking horse for his plans. But his Majesty, when approached, would have nothing to do with the English. This was the crowning stroke to the failure of Heath's ambitious plans, or at least he conceived it to be so. As he "could not persuade those foolish people from the present ruin and destruction which is just upon them", he gave orders for the watering of his ships preparatory to a voyage to Madras. In due course Fort St. George was reached, on the termination of one of the most singular cruises in the early history of the English in India.

Failure seemed to be written broadly across the position as it was left by this unfortunate adventure of Heath's. The foothold already obtained in Bengal had been lost, the Company's representatives everywhere in the province were in captivity and the feud with the Mogul Government had been aggravated until it menaced the Company's entire Indian trade. At the moment, however, when the sky seemed blackest it cleared in a surprising manner. The transformation was worked by the exercise of the will of Aurangzebe. The Emperor had never been greatly drawn to the English, and their recent policy had not tended to increase his regard for them. But he had been impressed by the strength that they had displayed at sea, and he reflected that if he continued at variance with them he would not only lose a lucrative source of trade but would find the route from India to the Holy Places in Arabia in the infidel's hands. He therefore issued instructions to the Nabob of Bengal that as it had been "the good fortune of the English to repent them of their irregular past proceedings and their not being in their former greatness", he would "not create for them any further trouble, and let them trade in Bengal as formerly".

Prompt action was taken by Ibrahim Khan, the new Nabob, who had succeeded to the Government of Bengal. He at once released the two English agents from their confinement and caused a message to be conveyed to Charnock informing him of the desire of the Government to live in amity with the Company. The change in the Mogul attitude was so startling as to arouse a not unnatural suspicion at Madras that it veiled some deep-laid scheme of treachery. It was decided, however, after mature consideration, to take advantage of the invitation to return to Bengal. To the end of August found Charnock and his associates once more installed at Calcutta, endeavouring to pick up the broken threads of a sadly disorganized trade.

Meanwhile, the authorities at home had made many important changes in the arrangements for the control of their Indian interests. In 1687 the seat of the Western Presidency was transferred from Surat to Bombay, this following upon a measure carried through six years' previously separating Bengal from Madras. It was also in this period that Sir John Child was appointed "Governor-General" with full powers in India to make peace or war. But the most significant move of all was that which was undertaken by the Company in 1689, when they issued a formal declaration in favour of territorial sovereignty. This truly momentary resolution affirmed that "the increase of our revenue is the subject of our care as much as our trade". "It is that", proceeded the document, "must maintain our force when twenty accidents may interrupt our trade, 'tis that must make us a nation in India. Without that we are but a great number of interlopers, united by His Majesty's royal Charter, fit only to trade where nobody of power thinks it their interest to prevent us". Here spoke the voice of true statesmanship. The purely trading era had passed away; that of the administrator had dawned.

The English never had any reason to repent their trustful action in renewing their connexion in Bengal. The Mogul Nabob was a man of peaceful and benevolent disposition, more of a student and philosopher than an administrator. He genuinely desired that there should be a lasting accommodation and used all his influence to smooth matters for the Company. It was, however, not until February 10, 1691 that what may be termed the title deeds of Calcutta were obtained by the issue of an imperial order authorising the English to trade on the payment of Rs. 3,000 yearly in lieu of all dues.

Now the feet of the English were on firm ground. They had what they had been long striving for, a conveniently placed headquarter settlement from which they could prosecute their trade with some assurance of freedom from irritating interference. How upon this site finally arose the vast city which ranks among the world's greatest capitals is a story which is part of the history of British India and need not be related here. But as in the case of Bombay, and to a lesser degree as in the case of Madras, the comparison between what was and what is affords an inspiring exercise to all patriotic Britons. A forlorn waste for the most part when first occupied, it has become by the energy and enterprise and policy of the paramount race a populous centre of abounding wealth and prosperity. Its merchants are amongst the world's leaders of commerce : its trade touches the four quarters of the globe : it is the home of philosophies and religions and the headquarters of a political movement which is profoundly influencing the course of events in India. If the British had done nothing else in India the creation of Calcutta on what was little better than a swamp would be a conclusive testimony to the genius of the race for the successful management of alien peoples.

Job Charnock did not live to see even the first glory of the city which he more than any other may be said to have founded. Full of years as they were reckoned for the Englishman at that time in India, and weighed down with the cares and responsibilities of his position, he died on January 10, 1693, in Calcutta. He was buried in St. John's Churchyard in the city in a grave which is said to contain also the remains of his much loved Indian wife, who predeceased him. Some four years after his death his son-in-law, Charles Eyre, erected over the tomb an elaborate mausoleum, which was the receptacle of the bodies of a number of his descendants who died in the latter part of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth century. This striking structure still stands, an object of interest to the curious visitor to Calcutta and a silent reminder of one to whom the city owes so much.

Few men of note in the early annals of British India have been the subject of acuter controversy than Job Charnock. Even before his death there had gathered about him a wealth of picturesque legend which distinguished him from the ordinary type of English adventurer of that day. As Chanak, a master mind who had by his almost superhuman powers defeated the Mogul forces at Hooghly, he had figured in Hindu tradition. The native imagination was impressed by his forceful qualities and also probably was not less influenced by the depth of his insight into Oriental ways. He had many detractors, especially in his later days, when the advance of age and the effects of nearly forty years' continuous residence in the tropics appear to have developed in him an irritability of manner and an apathetic indifference which produced evil results in the government. Those who followed him, and knew little of his earlier services, were not slow to depreciate his abilities, representing him as a



very commonplace type of man who had been installed in a position for which he was little fitted either by talents or temperament. There was this amount of truth in the picture that Charnock was ill-educated and plain of appearance and speech. His natural defects had probably been accentuated by an almost entire separation from European society during the greater part of his career. But that he was the cross-grained incompetent that he was represented to be by his immediate successors is not at all in accordance with the known facts of his history. These show him to have been a man of strong integrity and of shrewed judgment, eminently courageous not merely in the physical but in the higher and rarer moral sense. He was loyal to his employers in a period when the most lax views obtained as to the dictates of duty, and with that loyalty was mingled a zeal for his country's honour which was a brand of the purest patriotism. Time has done much to clear his memory from the aspersions of jealous and evil-minded contemporaries. He is seen now in truer perspective, as a man whose little personal failings were over-laid by sterling qualities and whose administrative shortcomings paled beneath the grandeur of achievements which have left an indelible mark on the history of the nation's relations with the East. (pp 290-308).

## PORTRAIT OF JOB CHARNOCK

Shortly after King James II came to the throne, the English got into a serious row at Hugly. Three soldiers had quarrelled in the bazar with some of the Nawab's peons. A Company of soldiers was called out for the defence of their comrades, afterwards a second and then the whole of the English troops. The Nawab's troops were beaten with less, sixty of them were killed and a considerable number wounded. A battery of eleven guns was spiked and the town itself commanded by Capt. Nicholson's ships. The Fouzdar solicited a cessation of hostilities which was granted on condition of his giving assistance to carry the Company's goods on board the ships. The Company were not pleased with Mr. Job Charnock's conduct on this occasion, deeming that the opportunity might have been rendered more available for producing a salutary impression of dread of our power. The English retired to the village of Chuttanutti or Calcutta in its embryo state. The Company had sent out orders to take Chittagong but this through mismanagement proved a failure. The truce concluded between the Fouzdar of Hugly and the Nawab was in a few months violated by the General of the latter suddenly appearing before town with a

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\*This portrait of Job Charnock was drawn by an anonymous writer (probably by the Editor himself, John William Kaye) in CALCUTTA REVIEW, Vol. 7, January-June, 1847 in a review article on the "Journal of Sir Thomas Roe", "A New Account of East Indies" by Alexander Hamilton, "A Voyage from England to India in the year 1754" by Edward Ives, "Annals of East India Company from 1600 to 1707-8" by John Bruce, "History of Moghal Dynasty" by Francis Catrou, "Outline History of Bengal" by John C. Marshman, 1838, "East Indian Sketchbook 1832", and "A few Local Sketches" by John Mawson, pp 220-282. These excerpts are taken from this review article, pp 247-248, p. 258 and 259-260.

large force. The English on this infraction of the treaty, immediately stormed and took the fort of Tanna and plundered and destroyed everything they could lay their hands on between that place and Ingellee. They subsequently burnt Balasore and destroyed about forty sail of the Mogul's ships. Affairs remained in this unsatisfactory state till the month of September 1687, when a *purwannah* was issued by the Nawab, granting permission to the English, who had taken refuge at Madras, to return to Hugly, with the continuation of their ancient privileges. This out-burst, if it served no other purpose, sufficiently satisfied the Native Authorities that it was more for the benefit of the country to let "the hatmen"—alone, than to provoke them. Trade in Bengal soon recovered itself, and Job Charnock ruled like a petty monarch of all he surveyed, which was not much. His army was suitable—consisting of about a hundred soldiers. He had very summary powers also, over all classes of the Company's servants, every one of whom he might dismiss, if he saw cause, without appeal (pp 247-248).

The Church-yard, in the midst of which St. John's Cathedral now stands, was in those days — "without the gate ?" — and had no church at all within its enclosure. The church of Calcutta stood then, at the west end of the range called Writers' buildings, but was destroyed by fire in 1756 at the capture of the city. What is now a church-yard was then a grave-yard, the *Golcotha* of the place. It was quite without the city, between which and it was, what was called the *gully*, a foul and deep *nullah*, into which all the impurities of the town were cast. This *nullah* was spanned by a bridge over which funeral processions passed—occupying about half the breadth of old Post Office Street. Crossing into this suburb, many a proper man passed feet fore-

most over that 'bridge of sighs'. There, in that green square field, level as a bowling green, where

*'Then heav'd the earth in many a mouldering heap,  
The rude forefathers of Calcutta sleep'.*

Why the memorials of the dead were removed from the humble graves they covered, we cannot tell — unless it was to prevent any more burials taking place there, after it became nearly the heart of the city. The rule, however, has not been adhered to, for two judges and two Bishops lie there, taking their rest (p. 258).

It is a question to be asked, but not so easily answered, how all those whose mortal dust is contained in that meadow-like field, over which erst so many tears have streamed; — lived, moved, and had being. There mouldereth old Job Charnock, Esquire, Chief of Calcutta, or as his name was pronounced by natives, and is spelt by Hamilton, no doubt from hearing it so pronounced by Europeans, as well as natives, *Channuck*. There was not a greater difference between the London houses, clay floored, and rush strewed, of the plantaganets, and the gorgeously carpeted, draperied, and or-molu gilded drawing rooms of Belgrave Square now, than there was between the Calcutta of Job Channuck and the re-edified Calcutta of Lord Clive. From Surat to Bombay, at Fort Saint George, Masulipatam, Kasimbazar, Balasore, and Piply, the style of living was the same. It came entirely under the comprehensive term of roughing, both as to eternal means and appliances, and table fare. It is singular, but is no less true nevertheless, that we know more about the personal history and appearance of an Athenian sage who flourished some time before the Christian era, than we do

about old Job Channuck. Both have the sacrifice of a cock incidentally, or circumstantially, associated with their names.

We owe a cock to Esculapius, which do thou see to, O Crito. Singular last words—for they *were* the last of that illustrious man—what mean they? Might they not mean—O my friend, I am just about to be cured for ever of that malady called life, we owe a cock to Esculapius. It was a proverbial expression, just as it is proverbial in the rural parts of Scotland, to say in regard to a grateful sense of favour conferred—"I owe you a day in harvest". In regard to our old governor of Chuttanuti again, the question of his annual sacrifice of a cock on the grave of that Hindu wife (whom he espoused under such romantic circumstances—after rescuing her from burning on the funeral pile of her husband) somewhat perplexes. Has this kind of ceremony any signifancy in Hindu ritual, or did he thus befool himself, as respects a heathenish ceremony, in consequence of a dying request of hers? Be that as it may,—on a sultry day of the year 1690, several boats stopped off the bank of the river Hugly, close to the dirtytstragglng village of Chuttanutti. One is a large budgerow with the English flag flying at her masthead. She is crowded with armed men both European and native, and the other boats among which are a few bauleahs are full of people. A somewhat portly looking man stands on her deck, over whose head is held a roundel or *chattah*, covered with scarlet cloth. He is dressed in a suit of half Flemish, half Spanish fashion. On his head is a broad leafed Flemish beaver hat, with two feathers falling to the left side, from beneath which may be seen his long locks of grey hair. He wears a short doublet of fawn covered satin—with a short light cloak of *tusser* or country silk. Down his neck is a ruff and falling collar of lace. His nether man is clad in Nankin

breeches of liberal wideness ending in fringes at the knee—three inches beneath which they are met by the wide tops of boots purfled with red morocco, while the interval between discovers white silk stockings. Round his waist he wears a broad buff belt, girt with a massive gold buckle, from the belt descends a long rapier – and the ornamented stocks of a pair of pistols are seen above the upper edge of the belt. His busy eye-brows and grised monstaches, his quick remarks and abrupt tones, give him a certain sternness as he is carried ashore, where a salaming crowd receives him. Reader, if you do not like this fancy portrait, go and procure a better elsewhere if you can. The Chief then steps into a *Taun-Jaun* and pointing to a wide spreading peepul tree desires to be carried there. Thereto he is borne accordingly, his roundel carried over his head—and while sitting under the grateful shade of that tree –and while holding communion with the Naib, and headmen of the village – there, *sub tegmine fagi*— at the place now known as the Boitakannah—the Patriarch of Chuttanutti, determines that the Capital of British India shall thence-forward be fixed. But it appears that his Tusculum, his country residence, was at Barreackpore, where he resorted to, not perhaps so much to avoid the dust and bother of his bustling capital—*fumum, et opes, strepitumque Roume*—as to be near that grave, where, rough and stern as he might be to others, (and tradition has it that he was so) there rested one, with whom his heart still beat in sympathy.

About 1678 he united himself in marriage with a young and beautiful Hindu girl, whom he and his guards had rescued by force from the funeral pile. By her he had several children, and appears to have lived with her about eight years. Upon her decease he enclosed a large piece of ground in the suburbs of

his factory, on which he erected a mausoleum, and there deposited her remains. We have the authority of Hamilton, of Asiaticus, and other writers for asserting the fact, however extraordinary it may appear, that during the remainder of his life he annually offered a cock to the memory of this much-lamented wife in her mausoleum, thus converting it into a heathen temple.

On the 10th of January, (1692/1693) Job Charnock died. He was buried in the same mausoleum with his wife, and from that time the cemetery, which had been originally appropriated to the sole use of his family, became the receptacle for the remains and tombs of the English population of Calcutta.

## CHARNOCK AND CHUTTANUTTI

It appears that the Factory was called Chuttanutty in the despatches sent from England, from the time when Charnock returned to Bengal, to the acquisition of the villages of Calcutta and Govindpore; after which it was called, the Presidency of Calcutta, and eventually, of Fort William.

Respecting the locality of Chuttanutty there can be no doubt. It stood on the area at present occupied by the native part of the town, and intereseected by the Chitpore Road, The evidence of this fact is to be found in the designation of the Ghat now called Haut Khola, which for more than ninety years was known as Chuttanutty Ghat as well as in the existence of the great bazar of Chuttanntty in its immediate vicinity. Govindpore, a straggling village, with clusters of native huts interspersed with jungle, occupied the site of Fort William, and the open plain around it. We find it stated in Holwell's valuable tracts that the rents of the Govindpore market having been affected by the neighbourhood of Kalee-ghat, the evil was remedied by establishing a toll on all articles brought into the English territories from that market. There can, therefore, be little hesitation in fixing the site of this village. The village of Calcutta, must therefore, have stood between Chuttanutty and Govindpore. In 1756 it included the whole of the ground occupied by the European houses; and which at the present time comprises what may be called the commercial and official portion of the town. It would be vain to endeavour to fix the original bounda-

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\* This note on Chuttanutty and Job Charnock appeared in the **CALCUTTA REVIEW**, Vol. 3 (1845), January-June, pp 437-438) and forms part of Marshaman's article, 'Notes on the Left or Calcutta Bank of the Hooghly'.



ries of the three villages ; but if the map drawn up by Mr. Holwell in 1752, and in which every house was noted, be still in the archives of Leadenhall Street, much assistance may be afforded to the future topography of the metropolis. The position of the original village of Calcutta is distinctly marked by the following circumstances — In the map of 1794 two portions of the town to the east of Tank Square are marked Dhee Calcutta. The great bazar now known only by its native name of Bura Bazar, was entered on the records before 1759 as being in Dhee Calcutta, and the ground on which St. John' Cathedral stands ; and which was presented by Raja Nubkissen, is also stated in the deed of gift as being in Dhee Calcutta (P. 438).

In 1691 we find Charnock residing in Chuttanutty with a hundred soldiers, but without either store houses or fortifications. He died the next year in January. His name is inseparably associated with the metropolis of British India, which he was accidentally the instrument of establishing, but there does not appear to have been any thing great or even remarkable in his character. He had no large or comprehensive views ; he was vacillating, timid, and cruel. He is said to have rescued a Hindoo female from the flames and to have subsequently bestowed his affections, if not his hand upon her, and he appears to have passed his time under the influence of native associations.

# CHARNOCK'S CHARACTER

By

**W. K. Firminger**

When a few minutes have passed by, it will be my privilege to ask you to rise and drink, in solemn silence, to the memory of the man who, after many years of faithful and fruitful service, in which he had been twice unjustly superseded, wearied often and exasperated by the long delays and deaf ears of unintelligent and frequently malicious superiors. Weakened by constant fevers, exiled for long periods from the ministrations of the Church (which in his rough unemotional way he loved), tracked down by those animosities which in the midst of a mean, back-biting and venial throng, it is the highest honour to a ruler to court and challenge fearlessly—after many a hardship and many an adventure—in a forlorn Sunday afternoon in the rains, this day two hundred and eighteen years ago, landed at Chutanuti,\* and there (if tradition may be followed) under a spreading *neem* tree, smoked the pipe of peace, and dreamed the dream of which this Capital City of India, is the lasting, though ever changeful, embodiment.

The Calcutta Historical Society has every reason to congratulate itself on our present gathering. We are proud to have with us tonight both the ruler of this province (H.H. Sir Andrew Fraser) and the administrator of our civic affairs (Sir Charles Allen). These gentlemen may, both of them, claim by right of

\* The toast proposed by Rev. W. K. Firminger at the Calcutta Historical Society's Charnock Dinner held at Pelitis Restaurant, Calcutta, on Monday the 24th August, 1908 to celebrate the 218th anniversary of Job Charnock's final settlement at Chutanuti on 24 August 1690, (*Bengal Past & Present*, 1908, Vol. II, Part ii, pp 530-533).

apostolic success and succession, to rule us from Job Charnock's chair. If old Job, like another Rip Van Winkle, could after a slumber of more than two centuries, return and take his place here at our board, we can imagine how interested he would be to meet and converse with a Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal of the Twentieth Century. We might well imagine too how old Job's interest would turn into amazement, when His Worship, Job Charnock, found that His Honour, Sir A. Fraser, was totally unconcerned in such matter as the saltpetre at Pattana, the amberty calicoes of Lachower, the silken quilts of Satgaon, and that the precise difference between a "rasay" and a "Zeffercany" is not now-a-days a subject of conversation at Belvedere. He would have some strange questions, no doubt, to ask of our friend the Senior Presidency Chaplain, our friend, Canon Cole, would be able to tell him that the Mausoleum wherein rest the mortal remains of Job himself and of two of his daughters has been well cared for and duly honoured by each successive generation. He would hear with satisfaction that the portrait of his old friend, the "busy politic Padre" and future Bishop of St. David's and Meath, is still hanging on the walls of the vestry-room of St. John's Church. But I imagine, he would smile a smile of pained amazement, and perhaps even of mistrust, when Canon Cole informed him that he (Canon Cole) had no peculiar interest in copper, sugar, or betel-nut, and that when, in March next, after nearly a quarter century of life in India, he would leave Bengal, he would do so without having acquired a private fortune of his own.

Gentlemen, the toast to which I claim your attention is the *pious* memory of the Founder of our City. We may congratulate ourselves on the fact that, after the work of the late Dr. C. R. Wilson, the adjective *pious*, in connection with his memory

in particular strikes no wrong note. The memory of our Founder has been rescued from that mirky dust of banal but obstinate myths by which it has been too long obscured. I take it that, when proposing a toast to the memory of the living departed — for unto God all live — we use the word “pious” in its classical sense an equivalent for “dutiful”, Aenas was pious, because from the blazing streets of sacked and fallen Troy he bore away on his shoulders his ancient father ; and the commemoration of our Founder is, in the same sense, an act of piety, since it well becomes the generation which inherits the fruits of Charnock’s sufferings and endurance, “to praise great men and fathers that begat us”. It is no part of our duty either to be blind to the defects in a character, which was certainly not beyond reproach, or to praise truth calls for censure ; yet it is, in the strictest sense of language an act of *piety* to do homage to all, that was unselfish, faithful, and brave in the man who chose for us the cradle of our Indian Empire. Sir Henry Yule has said, “We cannot claim a high character for Charnock”, but perhaps the truth has been best expressed, once and for all, by the great Christian scholar, whose name I have already mentioned, and whose words I will venture to quote.

“Charnock possessed the one rare but absolutely needful virtue of disinterested honesty, a virtue which must have been at this time difficult to retain : a virtue which must have raised up for him scores of secret enemies ; a virtue which makes us slow to believe evil of one, who in spite of all petty detraction, will always occupy a place among those who have the sovereign honour of being founders of commonwealths. Coarse and sinful he may well have been, for he seems to have been imperfectly educated, and he passed an unprecedented length of years in Indian service. But for my part I prefer to forget

the minor blemishes and to remember only his resolute determination, his clear-sighted wisdom, his honest self-devotion, and leave him to sleep on in the heart of the city which he founded, looking for his blessed resurrection and the coming of Him by whom alone he ought to be judged”.

Gentlemen, I venture to think that this attitude to Charnock's memory will commend itself to your judgment. It will say more. I venture to express my conviction that the further we probe into the archives of the past, the more thoroughly we purge away the stains of interested calumny, and rid ourselves of the worthless tittle-tattle (miscalled tradition), we shall be rewarded by the real vision of our Civil Founder—a man with a mighty firmness of purpose, sorrowed but never disheartened by being either misunderstood or treated with injustice, capable of setting aside all private grievances and animosities, Preferring his personal enemies to his friends when the affairs of the state called for the sacrifice, and always anxious to be on the side of the right than to have the right on his own side. I venture to predict that the voice of history will proclaim Charnock no unworthy predecessor to that great man, who in the darkest days which ever befell the fortunes of England beyond the seas, against the folly which cost us our political unity with America, gave to our race, nay to civilisation and humanity, the full fraught possibilities of the British in India. It was in 1773 that Warren Hastings wrote of Calcutta: “I do not despair of seeing it the first place in Asia, if I live, and am supported for a few years longer”.

For, Gentlemen, it is the verdict of those who have studied the records and familiarised themselves with all the circumstances of Charnock's choice of Sutanati, that Job acted, not at haphazard, but that he made his decision deliberately, wisely,

and well. You will remember the maxim which was prescribed for the contributors to the *Dictionary of National Biography*—“No flowers : by request”. This evening (although I am myself about to transgress) we might perhaps say, ‘No Rudyard Kipling by command.’ After all what has been written on the subject, there is no call for me to expose the fallacy of those familiar lines :

Once two-hundred years ago the trader came meek and tame  
Where his timid foot first halted there he stayed,

Till mere trade

Grew to empire, and he sent his armies forth, South and North  
Till the country from Peshwar to Ceylon was his own  
Thus the mid-day halt of Charnock—more’s the pity

Grew a city

So it spread

Chance-directed, chance-erected, laid and built on the silt.

There may lie in these lines a truth not wholly unserviceable to those who make it their duty to hasten schemes of improvement, but the general theory of the lines is now, we may be thankful, a recognized fallacy.

I have alluded to the local myths about Charnock. The story of the rescue of the Hindu widow from *Sati*, I am afraid, is far too good capital for the poets to part with. “Dak” in this day’s *Englishman* has further decorated the topic which Dr. Norman Chevers graced in the alleged epitaph on the tombstone of Josiah Townsend. If the lady stood in need of rescue, let us hope that it was Job who did the deed : but I am afraid there are two quite contradictory versions of the story of how Charnock came by his Indian bride. Alexander

Hamilton (a gentleman who by the way never said a good word for anyone if he could help it, and had a most powerful treasury of scandal at his command) tells the *Sati* story : Hedges tells us a very different tale. Both these gentlemen disliked Charnock. But, on the other hand, it is interesting and perhaps significant that in the baptismal registers at Madras, where the Baptism of Job's three daughters are recorded, the mother's name, contrary to custom, is not recorded.

It may be the fact that Charnock's closing years were not in accord with the strenuous manhood he had evinced in the days before he made his final halt at Chutanuti. When Sir John Goldsborough arrived, he found sad tales afloat about the late Chief's dissipated habits and laxity, and it was not foreign to Sir John's purpose to give those tales somewhat more than their full credit. But I venture to think that the man's whole career entitles us to be a little deaf to the gossip of interested detractors : and I venture to think that you will one and all agree with me that if handwriting is any indication of personal character, the firm clear signature of Job Charnock, which you have reproduced on your *menus*, in itself bears testimony to the clear mind of the man who penned it. It is worthy of the man, who led his little army out of Hijili, colours flying and drums beating, betwixt the ranks of an overwhelming and astounded enemy.

Disinterestedness and fidelity are the two great virtues we praise this great man who begat us. In Calcutta of today, we are inclined to think highly of anyone who, during long years of arduous and responsible service, never has failed to secure the warm approval of his employers. Such a man was Job Charnock. On one occasion, his masters in England wrote. "The experience we have of Mr. Charnock for 34 years past,

and finding that all that hate us to be enemies to him having wrought such a confidence in our minds concerning him that we shall not upon any ordinary suggestions against him change our ancient and constant opinion of his fidelity to our interest." It would be easy to quote passage after passage from the old records to show that, despite all the malicious depreciations of the great agent sent home from Madras and elsewhere, the Company at home never swerved in their sense of Job's value. Well, then, has Sir W. Hunter said : "Charnock now stands forth in the manuscript records as a block of rough British manhood. Not a beautiful person perhaps, for the founders of England's greatness were not such as wear soft raiment and dwell in king's houses ; but a man who had a great and hard task to do, and who did it — did it with small thought of self, and with a resolute courage, which no danger could daunt nor any difficulties turn aside. The masters who treated him so grudgingly knew his worth. He was in his life-time 'honest Mr. Charnock', no "prowler of himself beyond what was just and modest".

Gentlemen, the place of our Founder's burial is in the heart of our city. In the charity which thinketh no evil, we honour that mausoleum as the resting place of one whose memory, obscured by the calumnies of his foes and the foolish gossip of hack-guide writers, stands out now as a possession to be treasured by each generation of Calcutta men in its turn. His own children have placed on its walls the word "blessed Charnock", and this perhaps would have been the testimony his heart would have desired : "His children shall rise up and call thee blessed". (*Bengal Past & Present*, Vol II, pp 530-33).



## GOVERNOR JOB CHARNOCK (The Founder of Calcutta)

Mr. Charnock was the first Englishman who made a conspicuous figure in the political theatre of India. He was the founder of the British Settlement of Calcutta ; and may be said to have laid the first stone of the mighty fabric of our Indian Empire.

When peace was established between the great Emperor Aurungzebe and the English Company, Job Charnock, the Company's Chief at Hooghly, twice removed the factory, and in the year 1689-90, finally formed an English settlement at Calcutta, which ere one century terminated, became a mighty city - the magazine of trade — the arbitress of kingdoms -- and the seat of empire.

Mr. Orme rays, "Mr. Charnock was a man of courage, without military experience : but impatient to take revenge on a Government, from which he had personally received the most ignominious treatment, having been imprisoned and scourged by thh nabob".

The sense of such an indignity was, doubtless, deeply rooted in the mind of Charnock, and perhaps, was one of the reasons for the severe usage of the natives, ascribed to him by Captain Hamilton.

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\* From the BENGAL OBITUARY or a Record to perpetuate the Memory of Departed Worth, being a compilation of tablets and Monumental Inscriptions from various parts of the Bengal and Agra Presidencies. To which is added Biographical sketches and Memoirs of such as have pre-eminently distinguished themselves in the History of British India, since the Formation of the European Settlement to the Present Time. By Holmes and Co., 39 Cossitollah, Calcutta. Calcutta 1848. Printed at Baptist Mission Press.

Before, or about the year 1671-79, Mr. Charnock, smitten by the charms of a young and beautiful Hindu, who decked with her most pompous ornaments, and arrayed in her fairest drapery, was at the point of sacrificing an innocent life, of (perhaps) fifteen summers on the altar of Paganism, directed his guards to seize the half-unwilling victim; the obedient guards rescued her from an untimely death, and Charnock softly conducted her to his house. They lived together many years. She bore to him several children, and dying shortly after the foundation of his new city, was entered at the Mausoleum, which to this day stands entire, and is the oldest piece of masonry in Calcutta.

If we are to credit Captain Hamilton (who had the story from existing authorities) his sorrow for the loss of this lady was unbounded, and the public method he took of avowing his love, carried to an unusual though innocent excess. So long as he lived, he, on the anniversary day of her death, *sacrificed a Fowl in her Mausoleum*. We know, through the vale of time cannot trace his reasons for this extraordinary ceremony. We refer the reader to the Epitaphs for further information respecting Charnock's family and connections in India.

From an oral tradition still prevalent among natives at Barrackpore (now an established Military Cantonment, fourteen miles distant from Calcutta)\* we learn that Mr. Charnock built a bungalow there, and a flourishing bazar arose under his patronage, before the settlement of Calcutta had been determined on. Barrackpore is at this day best known to the natives by

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\* The English Cantonment at Barrackpore was formed in the year 1775, and the first bungalow was built there in the month of February, about 150 yards from where the flag-staff now stands. (Note on page 2, *Bengal Obituary*).

the old name of *Chanock*, and Captain Hamilton, misled by their method of pronounciation, invariably writes the name without the letter *r*.

Governor Job Charnock died on the 10th of January, 1692 ( 1693 ) ; and if the dead knew any of the living, and could behold with mortal feelings this sublunary world, with what ssensation would the Father of Calcutta glow to look down this day upon his city ?

The following is the Inscription taken from his monument situated on the north of the Church :

### D O M

Jobus Charnock, Armiger  
 Anglus nup in hoc.  
 regno. Bengalensi dignissim Anglorum  
 Agens Mortalitatis suae exuvias  
 sub hoc marmore deposuit, ut  
 in spe beatae resurrectionis ad  
 Christi judicis adventum obdormirent.  
 Qui postquam in solo non  
 Suo peregrinatus esset diu,  
 reversus est domum suae aeter  
 nitatis decimo die 10th Januarii 1692

### Pariter Jacet

MARIA, Jobi Primogenita,  
 Carole Eyre Anglorum  
 hicci Praefecti. conjux  
 Charisma. Quae obit  
 19 die Februarii A. D. 1696-97

( *Bengal Obituary*, P. 2 )

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## CHARNOCK in D.N.B.\*

**Charnock, Job** (d. 1693), founder of Calcutta, arrived in India in 1655 or 1656, not it would seem, in the service of the East India Company, which, however, he joined shortly afterwards, and in which he passed the remainder of his life. In 1658, he was a junior member of the council of the Bay, as the council in Bengal was then styled, and was stationed at Kasimbazar (Cossimbazar), at that time the site of one of the company's most important factories. About 1664 he was appointed chief of the Patna factory, but afterwards returned to Kasimbazar as chief, and remained there apparently until 1686, when he was transferred to Hugli, effecting his removal to the latter place not without difficulty; for, owing to a dispute with the nawab of Bengal regarding claims preferred by natives employed in the Kasimbazar factory against Charnock and his colleagues, that factory was watched by the nawab's troops to prevent Charnock from leaving it. Charnock by this time had become chief of the council of the Bay, his predecessor, Mr. Beard, having died in the previous year. Shortly after his arrival at Hugli, which he reached on 16 or 17 April 1686, Charnock became involved in hostilities with the foudar of that place, over whom, with the aid of troops lately sent out by the court of directors for a different purpose, he gained a very decisive victory. A truce was made through the mediation of the Dutch residents at Hugli; but before the end of the year, owing to the threatening attitude of the nawab of Bengal, Charnock deemed it necessary to leave Hugli, and to place himself and his followers in a more defensible position. In taking this step he was justified by

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\* From the *DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY*, Vol. IV, pp 129-132 (1950 reprint)

instructions which sometime before had been received from the court of directors, ordering that their establishment at Hugli should be moved to a place more accessible by sea, and therefore defensible. It had been suggested that they should seize for this purpose one of the islands at the mouth of the Ganges : but to this for various reasons, the Court objected, deeming that their object would be best attained by the seizure of Chittagong, and by the erection of a fort at that place. 'We', they wrote, 'have examined seriously the opinion of the most prudent and experienced of our commanders, all which doe concenter in this one opinion (and to us seeming pregnant truth), viz., that since those governors (i.e., the native rulers) have by that unfortunate accident and the audacity of the interlopers, got the knack of trampling upon us, and extorting what they please of our estate from us, by the besieging of our factorys and stopping of our boats upon the Ganges, they will never forbear doing so till we have made them as sensible of our power as we have of our truth and justice, and we, after many deliberations, are firmly of the same opinion, and, resolve, with God's blessing, to pursue it'. In conformity with this decision, they sent out a squadron and six complete companies of soldiers, with instructions to take on board the Chief and principal members of the Council of the bay, to seize all vessels belonging to the mughal pending an answer to a letter which was to be despatched to the nawab of Bengal, and, in the event of no satisfactory settlement being come to with the nawab to proceed to Chittagong, 'where, after summons, if the fort, town, and territory thereunto belonging be not forthwith delivered to our lieutenant-colonel Job Charnock, we would have our forces land. seize, and take the said town, fort, and territory by force of arms'. At that time troops sent out to the company's factories were not accompanied by any officers of higher rank than

lieutenant, the post of colonel, lieutenant-colonel, major, and captain being filled by the members of the council on the spot.

In regard to the details of Charnock's exodus from Hugli some uncertainty exists. According to Orme, 'Charnock on the 15th December took the field, and, marching down the western bank of the river, burned and destroyed all the magazines of salt and granaries of rice which he found in his way between Hughley (Hugli) and the island of Ingelee (Hijili), which lies at the mouth of the river on the western shore'. (Orme, *History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan*, II, 12, Madras edition 1861). In a native account, written apparently in the beginning of the present century, Charnock is described as having left Hughli by water, and, taking his vessel out to sea, 'proceeded towards Dakhen', i.e. Southern India. (Elliot, *History of India as told by its own Historians*, VIII, 378 seq. ). In this account Charnock is credited with the possession of supernatural powers, which were exhibited by his burning, by means of a burning-glass, the whole of the river face of the city of Hugli as far as Chandernagore, and by his cutting through with his sword a heavy iron chain which had been stretched across the river for the purpose of intercepting his vessel. Both these accounts are silent regarding the fact, which has been revealed by some old official correspondence recently discovered (1886) at the India Office, that the place to which Charnock repaired after leaving Hugli was Sutanati, one of the three villages which then stood on the site of the present city of Calcutta, and that there he entered into an agreement with an agent of the nawab for the security of the Company's trade, which, however, was not ratified by the nawab. Failing to obtain a ratification of the treaty, Charnock proceeded to Hijili, the island at the

mouth of the river, already referred to, where he and his party remained for three months, exposed to occasional attacks from the troops of the nawab, but suffering far more from fever, which carried off two-thirds of Charnock's force. Eventually the Emperor of Delhi, finding that his revenues were suffering from the hindrance to trade caused by the naval operations of the company on the western coast, decided to redress the grievances of the company's agents on both sides of India, and sent orders to the nawab of Bengal, which resulted in a discontinuance of hostilities at Hijili; and in the execution of a treaty under which the English were permitted to return to all their factories in Bengal, and likewise to erect docks and magazines at Ulaberea, a village on the western bank of the Hugli, about 50 miles from the mouth of the river. After a short stay at Ulaberea, Charnock returned to Sutanati, where he obtained leave to establish himself; but owing to a fresh outbreak of hostilities between the company and the emperor on the western coast, the treaty made at Hijili was set aside by the nawab, who again assumed a hostile attitude. At this juncture Charnock, who had disappointed the expectations of the court of directors by delaying to give effect to their instructions for the seizure of Chittagong, was temporarily superseded by a Captain Heath, who after a series of extraordinary proceedings, including a futile demonstration against Chittagong, carried Charnock and the rest of the company's agents in Bengal to Madras, at that time the chief settlement of the company on the eastern coast of India. After a stay of some fifteen months at Madras, Charnock again through the intervention of the emperor, returned in July 1690 for the third and last time to Sutanati, where he obtained from Aurangzib a grant of the tract of country on which Calcutta now stands.

This he cleared of jungle and fortified ; confirming, it is said, the emperors' favourable disposition by sending to Delhi an English physician, who cured the emperor of carbuncle. There is a tradition that fourteen years before his death Charnock married a young and beautiful Hindu widow, whom he had rescued by force from the funeral pile, and had several children by her. On her death he enclosed in the suburbs of Calcutta a large piece of ground, which now forms the site of St. John's Church, and erected there, over his wife's remains, a mausoleum, in which he was himself buried on his death in January 1693. There is also a legend that Charnock, after the death of his wife, every year sacrificed a cock to her memory in the mausoleum.

Charnock appears to have enjoyed in an unusual degree the confidence of the directors of the East India Company. In the official despatches of the time he is constantly mentioned in very laudatory terms. He is described as having rendered 'good and faithful service ;' as 'one of our most ancient and best servants ;' as 'one of whose fidelity and care in our service we have had long and great experience ;' as 'honest Mr. Charnock ;' as a 'person that has served us faithfully above twenty years ; and hath never, as we understand, been a prowler for himself beyond what was just and modest ;' &c. &c. The only occasions on which the court adopted a different tone towards Charnock were when he failed to carry out their instructions to seize Chittagong, a project which Charnock justly deemed to be, in the circumstances, impracticable, and when, in their opinion, he was not sufficiently firm in demanding the execution of the terms of the agreement made with the nawab's agent at Sutanti ; but even in these cases the unfavourable remarks were qualified by expression of confidence in Charnock and by allusions to the perplexities occasioned to him by the machinations of his



enemies in the council. The despatch relating to the second of these matters ends with the following remark: 'The experience we have of Mr. Charnock for thirty four years past, and finding all that hate us to be enemies to him, have wrought such a confidence in our mind concerning him, that we shall not upon any ordinary suggestions against him change our ancient and constant opinion of his fidelity to our interest'. The Court's treatment of Charnock certainly contrasts very favourably with that which in those days they meted out to most of their governors and agents, whom, as a general rule, after appointing them with every expression of confidence, they treated with a capricious harshness altogether unworthy of wise administrators. The high opinion which the court entertained of Charnock was not shared by Sir John Goldsbororough, their captain-general in succession to Sir John Child, who visited Sutanati shortly after Charnock's death. In a report written by that functionary in 1693 animadversions are made upon Charnock, which reflect alike upon his administrative capacity and upon his private character. He is there charged with indolence and dilatoriness in the performance of his public duties and with duplicity in his relations with his colleagues and subordinates.

(This account of Charnock is based chiefly upon a collection of the official correspondence of the time, imperfect in parts, which has recently been compiled by Colonel Yule, and printed for the Hakluyt Society. Reference has also been made to Mill's HISTORY OF BRITISH INDIA, pp 84-86, edition of 1858, Orme's HISTORY OF MILITARY TRANSACTIONS IN INDOSTAN, II, 12-15, Madras edition 1861, Marshman's HISTORY OF INDIA, I, 211-14 edition of 1867, GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE 1824, Part I. p 195, MEN WHOM INDIA HAS KNOWN, pp 33-34, Madras 1871. A. J. A. pp 129-132.)

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## JOB CHARNOCK'S HINDU WIFE: A RESCUED SATI

By

**Hari Charan Biswas**

Suttee (*sati*, 'the lady who follows her husband to the funeral pyre, is supposed to be a model partner. Diodorus Siculus speaks of this institution as having had its origin among the Rajpoots in "the crime of one wife who destroyed her husband by pison". The practice of Sati had been in force for many centuries. Many hundreds of innocent lives were, brutally and unnecessarily, sacrificed every year. Many unwilling victims were obliged to be burned on their husbands' funeral pyre. A fair girl, not exceeding ten years of age, was once rescued by a body of English seamen and was conveyed to English house. As her relatives did not take back her home, she was baptised and lived with the English in the factory at Masulipatam. Another story relates how it was arranged for a woman to be burned, about 6 miles above Hugli. Knowing that her refusal to follow her husband to the funeral pyre would be of no avail, she at first consented to do so. But when the fire burned furiously she refused to leap over it; whereupon the Brahmans tried to take hold of her; she caught hold of the first person that laid hands on her and dragged him with herself into the fire, where both of them perished in a moment. Lord Cornwallis and Wellesley tried to enforce certain measures to stop the objectionable practice. Lord Minto ordered the officials to shake off their indifference in the matter, and made it incumbent on the parties to obtain the previous permission of the local

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\* From HINDUSTAN REVIEW. September 1910, Vol. XXII, No. 133, pp 298-301.

authorities before a case of *suttee* was allowed. At last Lord William Bentinck announced in the *Calcutta Gazette* of the 7th December, 1829, that "the practice of sati, or burning or burying alive the widows of Hindus, (is) illegal and punishable by the Criminal Courts." No great commotion, however, followed the announcement. Dwarkanath Tagore and Rammohan Roy, the two great reformers of Bengal, moved strongly against the practice and rendered valuable help to Lord Bentinck, in passing the law

Two centuries before Bentinck, Job Charnock, the founder of the "City of Palaces" felt for this brutal practice. In 1655 or 1656 he came out to India, apparently not in the Company's service, but soon obtained an engagement for five years, as a junior member of the Council of Cassimbazar. We have no information as to his family connections and early life. All that can be inferred from his name is, that he was a Lancashire man. His name appears in the first roll of the new Company formed under Cromwell's Charter as a fourth member of the Council of Cassimbazar with a salary of £ 20, in January, 1658. His memorial of 23rd January, 1664, shows that he had intended to return to England at the expiration of the stipulated period, but was willing to remain, if appointed Chief of the Patna factory. He got the appointment and continued in it till 1680. Charnock lived at Patna for many years, and there he learned to understand the Indian ways of thought and action. By close application he acquired a perfect mastery in Persian, which was the Court language of the day, adopted native habits and customs, and had frequent admittance into the Nabob's presence. He is said to have believed in some of the local superstitions and had been in the habit of worshipping the five saints, or the *Panch Pir*, with the sacrifice of a cock, after the manner of the

people of Behar. The *Panch Pir*, as is well known, were invoked on occasions of danger, but unlike their brethren of Behar the Bengal Mussalmans do not observe any special ceremony. The Mussalman boatmen generally shout, when unfurling their sails, "Allah, Nabi, *Panch Pir*, rakhiya karo".

Amid the forest of the old city of Sonargaon, which was formerly famous for the manufacture of fine muslin in the district of Dacca there may, to this day, be seen a holy shrine called the *Panch Pir*, to which the Hindus and Mahomedans resort from long distances in fulfilment of vows. Nothing has yet been ascertained, who these *Panch Pir*, are. The fact of Hindus worshipping the Mahomedan saints testifies to the high reputation for sanctity they enjoy. When a disciple is initiated a cock is sacrificed, and the sacrifice forms a part of the worship of *Panch Pir*. Dr. Wise tells us the story of an Englishman in East Bengal, who was called the "Panch Piriya Shahib", the reason adduced for this being that his parents were advised by a servant to consecrate their "next child" to *Panch Pir*, as they had lost one after another. Acting up to this advice they were pleased to see that their child grew strong and healthy.

Sometime in the year 1678, Charnock, who was walking on the banks of the river, saw a beautiful gorgeously attired YOUNG BRAHMAN WIDOW, who had scarcely seen fifteen summers, proceeding reluctantly towards the funeral pyre of her late aged husband. Smitten with the charms of the young lady, he at once ordered the guards that accompanied him, to rescue her from an untimely end and safely conducted her to his own residence. An allusion to the forcible rescue of the widow is to be found in an Epitaph on the tomb of "Pilot Townsend" in St. John's Church :—

Shoulder to shoulder, Job my boy — into the crowd like a  
wedge ;  
Over with your hangers, messmate, but do not strike with  
the edge,  
Cries Charnock—"Scatter the faggots ! double that Brah-  
mins into two !  
The tall pale wiodow is mine, Job — the little brown girls  
for you.

She became his wife, lived lovingly for many years, and bore him several children, three of whom married Englishmen ; the eldest Mary having espoused Charles Eyre, by whom afterwards the Charnock mausoleum was erected : Elizabeth, the widow of William Bowridge, Junior Merchant, was alive, in Calcutta ; till 1753 ; the youngest, Catherine, married a member of the Council, Jonathan White, in her nineteenth year. Miss Blechynden, the authoress of a gossipy volume on Old Calcutta, states that Charnock's wife lived for twenty-five years, but the fact is open to controversy. Such was the influence of the young lady over her lord that instead of being herself converted to Christianity, she converted Charnock to Paganism. We have not yet been able to ascertain when and where Charnock's Hindu wife died ; but it is believed that she preceded him to the grave shortly after the foundation of Calcutta, and was buried in the family vault in the burial ground subsequently known as St. John's Churchyard, where also rest the mortal remains of Old Job. He loved her dearly, and his sorrow for the loss of the lady was boundless. His wife, though a Hindu and strong enough to convert her husband into her own religion, was not, however, burnt according to Hindu rites. "The only part of Christianity that was remarkable in him, was burying her decently". He built a monument over her and used annually to sacrifice a cock at the spot on the anniversary of his wife's death.

The CHARNOCK MAUSOLEUM is a massive structure, octagonal in form, with a double dome, near the northern wall of St. John's Church. There are four slabs within. One to Job himself; one to his youngest daughter, Mrs. White who died in her first confinement, aged 21: a third to Mary, his eldest daughter, wife of Charles Eyre who succeeded Charnock, died four years after her father, 19th January, 1696: and the last to William Hamilton, the Surgeon. In 1894 some earth was dug to see whether there was anything in proof of his wife being buried in the same grave with her husband. Nothing of a vault was seen, but a quantity of bricks mixed with earth, from which it can be inferred, that there was originally a grave which Mr. Eyre, when burying his wife, might have destroyed. The version of Mr. William Hedges in connection with the same fact, in his journal, under date 1st December 1682, at Dacca, is as follows:—

“This morning a Gentoo, sent by Bulchand, Governor of Hughly and Cassimbazar, made complaint to me that Mr. Charnock did shamefully to the great scandal of our nation, keep a Gentoo woman of his kindred which he had these 19 years; and that, if I do not cause him to turn her away, he would lament of it to the Nabob which, to avoid further scandal to our nation, with fair words I prevailed with ye poor fellow to be pacified for ye present. I was further informed by this and divers other persons that when Charnock lived at Patna, upon complaint made to ye Nabob that he kept a Gentoo's wife (her husband still living or but lately died,) who was run away from her husband and stolen all his money and jewels to a great value, the said Nabob sent 12 soldiers to seize Mr. Charnock, but he escaping (or bribing ye men), they took his vakeel and kept him 2 months in prison, ye soldiers lying

all this while at ye Factory gate, till Mr. Charnock compounded the business for Rs 3,000 in money, 5 pieces of Broad cloth and and some swordblades. Such troubles as these he had divers times at Cassimbazar, as I am credibly informed; and whenever she or Mr. Charnock dyes, ye pretence will cretainly be heavy on ye Company”.

Opinions differ and the version of Mr. Hedges should be accepted with care, as he was no friend of Charnock's; Capt. Hamilton and the majority of the historians, however, are in favour of the former theory.

No portrait of Charnock's exists at the present day. It was not given him to return to England and to receive the aeclamations of his countrymen. It is said that Calcutta and St. Petersburg were founded at the same time, both in insanitary sites. The founder of the latter has made a history of his own, while that of the former has none. Unlike persons of his own nationality, who have done nothing to perpetuate his name, the Indians have saved his memory from passing into oblivion. They call Barrackpore (where he is said to have a Bungalow and small bazar) Channock or Achanak. Much light has been thrown on some aspects of the life of the founder of Calcutta in an excellent article in a recent issue of *Bengal Past & Present*, but until the disputed questions are finally settled, we have no other alternative but to accept the old hypothesis. (HINDUSTAN REVIEW, Sept. 1910, pp 298-301).

# SOME HISTORICAL MYTHS

By

**Wilmot Corfield**

An article by Mr. H.C. Biswas in the *Hindustan Review* for September last again gives currency to slanders on the memory of a man which should be dear to every succeeding generation of Calcutta citizens. The title-tattle (sometimes referred to as "tradition") revived by the author of the article is entirely lacking in confirmation, and of a kind that would only be too likely to arise in the communities in the midst of which Charnock dwelt, and where he must of necessity have made many enemies owing to his habit of honesty and the British standard of conduct he held as right. Hamilton, who never said a good word for anyone if he could help it and had a most powerful treasury of scandal at his command (I quote Mr. Firminger at the "Charnock" dinner of 24th August, 1908) tells the "sati" story. Hedges tells the story quite a different way. Against the "cock killing" myth too, carrying with it the implication of Job's formal lapse into heathendom may be set the fact that his own children placed on his grave a memorial slab in a Christian burial ground words that testify to his adhesion at the end to the faith of his own people. Bearing in mind the social conventions of that day the romantic tale of how Charnock won his wife is one which many would like to accept as true. It should never however be stated as being actually a fact, and Mr. Biswas has stated it.

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\* This criticism of Mr. Biswas's preceding article appeared in the HINDUSTAN REVIEW of December 1910 (Vol. 22, whole No. 136, pp 657-8).



The article also mis-quotes from an epitaph on the tomb of "Pilot Townsend" in St. John's Church, Calcutta, the verses containing the lines :

"Shoulder to shoulder, Joe my boy into the crowd like a  
wedge"

and

"The tall pale widow is mine, Joe — the little brown girl's  
for you",

but in each case "Job" has been substituted for "Joe", a change materially altering the general idea that it was the object of the poet to convey.

The verses are said to be found, on the tomb in the course of the epitaph. They are not so to be found, and they never were on the tombstone, nor yet is the stone to be found on the tomb of "Joe" the pilot, and the Pilot's name was Townshend, not Townsend. Thus, it is that history goes wrong. The stone with a verseless inscription is now embedded with many others in the pavement surrounding Charnock's mausoleum in St. John's Churchyard. The spot where rest the remains of the Pilot has been lost sight of since the devastating "improvements" in the churchyard made many years ago.

The verses were written by Dr. Norman Chevers of the Medical Establishment, and appeared in the *Englishman* in (or about) July 1869. They are subsequently mauled by Mr. Rudyard Kipling and introduced into his "The Light that failed". It would be a pleasing and beautiful thing were the *Englishman* to reproduce the original version giving the exact date of their first appearance in its pages.

Of "honest Mr. "Charnock", the clear-sighted pioneer Englishman who passed an unprecedented length of years of Indian service "no prowler for himself beyond what was just and modest", "a man" (again to quote Mr. Firminger) "with a mighty firmness of purpose, sorrowed but never disheartened by being either misunderstood or treated with injustice and always anxious to be on the side of right". Sir William Hunter has written, "Charnock now stands forth in the manuscript records as a block of rough hewn British manhood". Let us leave our civic founder at that.

Mr. Biswas's closing remark that "Indians have saved Charnock's memory from passing into oblivion" may be passed over for what it is worth. "The small bazar" at Barrackpore called "Chanock or Achanock" if it exists or ever existed need not necessarily have derived its name from "Charnock", that of the British trader. Other derivations are easy to suggest. The stretch of thoroughfare from Koila Ghat Street to Fairlie Place is now known as "Charnock Place", though neither the naming of an obscure little market, nor of a strip of pavement in a big town after the greatest of great English pioneers was necessary to keep his memory green.

None the less the question arises why not a worthy Calcutta memorial to Job Charnock? No portrait of him exists. To suggest a statue to him on the Maidan would evoke the twaddling cackle of local fooldom in full flood ever alert to prevent the carrying out of any proposal making for the extension of the usefulness or the further beautifying of that huge stretch of gracious greenery. Between Eden Gardens and the River are hideous structural excrescences which, occupying the commanding position they do any other capital city in the Empire, but Calcutta would sweep away in a night in just though

wrathful indignation. I should like to see there, on the ridge of the river bank, silhouetted against the sky and stream a huge block of rough hewn granite bearing a statue symbolical of "Courage" or some other manly virtue characteristic of a strong and good man. The statue should be looking along the mighty waterway Charnock won the England of his day, and for us in ours, to the lasting gain of India and the world, and (to adapt),

Underneath well written  
in letters all of gold  
How gallantly he held the ridge  
In the brave days of old.

This artistic memorial to a colossal personality would become one of the outstanding attractions of the Queen City of India. It would command the respect of British and Indian alike and its cost need not be that which many a monument to a man of but microscopical moment has hitherto reached.

There is another, too, whose memory Calcutta should cherish, which is however, likely to really pass into oblivion. Of all it has accomplished the *Englisman* should be more than proud of having afforded an opportunity for first giving to the world the one poem of all others inspired and written in Calcutta which has passed into English literature. Full of the true poetic ring it is of the stuff that lives. But I have yet to learn that even a memorial portrait of Dr. Norman Chevers has been placed in the Victoria Hall Gallery.

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## W K. Firminger's Note on Mr. Biswas's preceding article\*

To the *Hindustan Review* Mr. Hari Charan Biswas has contributed an interesting article on the Founder of Calcutta — Job Charnock ; but he makes the old wearisome mistake of supposing that there is a verse inscription on the tomb of “Pilot Townsend”. I have gone into this matter in past numbers of *Bengal: Past & Present*, and all I can say here is that the verses, which never appeared in any tomb in St John's compound, saw light for the first time in the *Englishman* in July 1869, and they were most probably an original contribution on the part of Dr. Norman Chevers. The verses are of no historical value whatsoever. Mr. Hari Charan Biswas gives the year 1678 as the date of the (supposed) rescue of Charnock's bride from *Sati*. Katherine, Job's third daughter, died in 1700/1 aged nineteen, and the eldest daughter, Mary cannot have been born much before 1677. Mr. Biswas hints that Charnock built the mausoleum in his life-time. It was most probably built by Job's son-in-law, Sir C. Eyre, at least four years after Job's death. While on the subject of the Charnocks, I may here offer a correction of a statement in Hyde's *Parochial Annals of Bengal*, a work almost defeats the powers of the most minute critic to correct. Mr. Hyde (p. 45) writes : — “The second daughter of Job, *Elizabeth*, survived in Calcutta, till 1753. She was the widow of William Bowridge, Junior Merchant, who was buried on the 16th April 1724”. The William Bowridge of this note was the son, not the husband of Charnock's second daughter. The *Bengal Public Consultations* of July 31, 1718, show that at that date “Mrs. Elizabeth Bowridge” was the relict of Mr. Willam Bowridge deceased”, and that her son “William Bouridge was

born Tuesday the 6th August, in the year of our Lord Sixteen hundred and ninety-five, between eight and nine of the clock at night in this Town of Calcutta, which is registered and wrote by her Husband's own hand in the leaf of her small Bible which leaf she has by her". In the footnote of P. 84, *Bengal Past & Present*, Vol. II, last line, for "1734", please read "1724".

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\* From the "Leaves from the Editor's Notebook", *Bengal Past & Present*, Vol. 6, July—December 1910, pp 407-408.

# **JOB CHARNOCK'S VISIT TO FORT St. GEORGE AND BAPTISM OF HIS CHILDREN**

By

**Mrs. Frank Penny**

It was in the time of Elihu Yale that Job Charnock or Channock as he has sometimes erroneously been called, the founder of Calcutta, visited Madras. Calcutta did not exist in those days ; it was but a sandy flat by the banks of the Hugly, where each year a cotton market sprang up in the shipping season ; and it went by the name of the Cotton mart. The native name was Chuttanuttee or Sutanuti. Charnock came of a good Lancashire family, of the same standing as that of Master. He arrived in India in 1656 and entered the Company's service on September 30th, 1658, on a salary of twenty pounds a year. In 1666 he became Senior Merchant, and he seems to have been always employed in the factories of the Bay, and never to have held any appointment in Madras.

When the Bay was placed under Master's supervision Charnock was brought into contact with Master, as has already been mentioned, the result was not very fortunate. Charnock at the time was busy inland at Patna, trying to obtain saltpetre for his employers. There was no obstacle in the way of purchasing it, but considerable difficulty was experienced in getting it down to Balasore at the mouth of the Hughly, where the ships were awaiting it. If it did not arrive within a certain time they would have to sail without it, because of the monsoon. It had to go down the river in native boats, and it is easy to understand how

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\* From FORT ST. GEORGE, MADRAS by Mrs. Frank Penny, London, Swan Sonnenschein & Co. Ltd. 1900, Chapter XII, pp 120-126.

the determined, but quick-tempered merchant must have been irritated by the senseless delays made by the boatmen. When at last he did get his saltpetre loaded and despatched, he had the vexation of seeing the boats return after they had got half way to their destination. He was not a man to give in to adverse fate or the stupidity of the native, and instead of obeying Master's orders he remained at Patna until he had assured himself that every boat-load would reach Balasore. Probably it was the fear of pirates which caused the boatmen to make the delay : pirates infested the creeks of the Hughly and laid wait for boats ascending the river.

In the midst of all Charnock's trouble and anxiety over the saltpetre so urgently demanded by Directors, Master made him Chief of Kasimbazar, ordering him to appear at the factory to take charge of it, meet the Governor and his staff who were on tour through the Bay. Charnock accepted the Chiefship, but said briefly, that he was unable to come to Kasimbazar immediately. Master gave him a short period of grace, and then finding that he did not appear, he bestowed the appointment on another man. Although Charnock felt the slight of being superseded, he made no effort to explain matters, but merely nursed his wrath against the man who had wronged him. His uncompromising character prevented him throughout the whole course of his service ever doing himself justice. He would not stir a finger to secure the goodwill of his fellow-men, nor even take the trouble to show his best side to the Directors. They recognised his worth and called him honest ; for he was one of the very few men who abstained from private trade, and after thirty-eight years in their service died a comparatively poor man. But they found occasion to abuse him for his determination ; a quality which they recognized only as obstinacy : they called him

blatant and truculent, and gave him credit for contentiousness, when he was only showing his colleagues that he possessed the courage of his opinions.

In 1680 he was sent to Murshidabad. Then he had to put up with much opposition from the natives, who besieged him in his factory. He escaped and went to Hugly, and in 1686 the Directors placed a force under his command to enable him to effect a settlement, which would offer strategical advantages and could be fortified. They were beginning to understand the necessity of fortifications if their trade was to be undisturbed, and were anxious to build just such a Fort in the Bay as had arisen in Madras on the Coromandal Coast. They knew very little of the geography of India, and had made up their minds that Chittagong would be the most suitable of all sites in the Bay for the new factory. To Charnock this must have appeared nothing short of madness, Chittagong being far away on the Eastern side of the Bay and the refuge of all the European outcastes of the East. It was a home for the pirate and the robber, a place to be avoided rather than sought. No man knew the Hugly better than Charnock; and he had already gauged the advantages offered by the strip of land on which Cotton Mart stood. There was a good anchorage in the river for ships on one side, a series of salt-lakes and swamps on the other, which would protect from the attacks of natives. It had one disadvantage, namely its unhealthy climate, but this he thought might be overcome, and prove no worse in the end than the climate of Hughly, Kasimbazar and other places in the Bay. But the Fates were against him; he was driven from pillar to post, up and down the river, without being able to effect his purpose, strongly opposed by the natives and discountenanced by the Directors.



In 1688 Captain Heath was sent out direct from the Court to carry a severe reproof to the truculent Charnock, and he was further enjoined to convey the unfortunate merchant with his party *nolens-volens* to Chittagong. Heath arrived, and Charnock pleaded hard for assistance and time to carry out his original scheme ; but the Captain refused to listen. Chittagong was the spot selected by the Directors for the new fort, and to Chittagong Charnock should go. The disheartened man felt it was useless to oppose the will of the Court any longer, and sorrowfully he and his staff embarked. Heath set sail for his Eldorado, having, like his employers, the haziest notion of its locality. When at last he anchored before it, he found it was impossible to establish a colony there, partly on account of its lawless inhabitants and partly because of its unsuitable situation. But he was unwilling to allow Charnock to return or to listen to his “I-told-you-so” ; and after sailing about the Bay for three long weary months, he landed his passengers at Madras on March 17th, 1689.

Their arrival was unexpected, and somewhat disconcerting to Yale and his Council, as Charnock’s staff alone amounted to 28 people,—Council, factors and writers. The Bengal ships brought also his soldiers, four companies in all, with many “supernumerary officers”, and there was some difficulty in housing such a party. To make room in the garrison for the soldiers, the topasses who had refused to serve in any other place but the Fort were disbanded and dismissed, and Charnock and his party were accommodated among the English residents, being fed at the Company’s expense. The enforced rest to the harassed merchant must have been beneficial, although he doubtless chafed at the inactivity of his life in the Fort, and at the temporary failure of his designs.

Here he had to remain in uncertainty until October, when a letter was received from the Nawab, Ibrahim Khan, inviting him to return to Bengal and promising his protection. The matter was referred to Surat for decision, and on the receipt of the approval of the Governor there, Charnock and his party set sail for the Bay. On August 24th, 1690, he once more anchored before Cotton Mart, and landing with a guard of only thirty soldiers, he set himself to his self-appointed task of founding a fortified factory on the river. The few buildings he had erected in 1688 had been destroyed, but, nothing daunted ; he began to rebuild and fortify with all his old dogged determination and indomitable spirit, laying the foundation of a city whose future greatness he could never know, nor in his most ambitious moments even dream of. He and his people had to be content with mud huts and native boats for their habitations ; the places were for posterity.

Charnock's visit to Madras is not only interesting on account of his having sailed thence to found the City of Places, but also because there is positive proof that he brought his family with him on that occasion. He was never married, but formed an alliance with a Caste Hindu lady who claimed his protection under romantic circumstances. The story, as originally told, came from the pen of Captain Alexander Hamilton.

It is as follows :— In the early days of his residence in Bengal before the Moghul war, Charnock wished to see the ceremony of *Suttee* in which Hindu widows were burnt alive—with their deceased husbands. It was common enough in those days, but difficult of belief to the foreigner and the stranger. He accordingly attended the burning ground on one occasion when the ghastly ceremony was to be performed, accompanied by a body-guard of soldiers. When the young

widow was brought to the pile he was much touched by her beauty : it seemed so iniquitous a thing that she should be sacrificed to the memory of a dead man ; that he ordered his troops to rescue her. They carried her away by force, and she was sheltered in his own house. The natural consequence ensued, she being full of gratitude towards the preserver of her life, and his heart being softened with pity. If once he set himself to obtain a thing Charnock was not the man to be balked of his wishes. Probably the conquest was easy in this case ; for a return to her people was impossible. She was an outcaste for ever in their eyes ; and her fate in their hands would have been worse than death. She accepted Charnock's offer of a home with him, and she became the mother of his children. She bore him three little girls, who accompanied him to Madras, and she lived with him until her death, and was ever his faithful companion. Hamilton avers that at her request Charnock embraced Hinduism, but he admits that he gave her decent burial, "the only part of Christianity that was remarkable in him", continues the sharp-tongued historian. "He built a tomb over her, where all his life after her death he kept the anniversary day of her death by sacrificing a cock on her tomb after the Pagan manner : this was and is the common report, and I have been credibly informed, both by Christians and Pagans who lived at Calcutta under his Agency, that the story was really matter of fact".\*

There is an entry in the baptismal register book of St. Mary's Church (Madras) which rebuts the accusation of Paganism on the part of Charnock. It is as follows :— "August 19th, 1689,

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\* Mrs Seaton and Mrs. Heathfield were both Madras ladies. The latter has been already mentioned as the widow of Robert Fleetwood. The former was the wife of Captain Francis Seaton who commanded the garrison. ( note on P. 125 )

Charnock, Mary, Elizabeth and Katherine, daughters of Job Charnock, baptised by J. Evans. Francis Ellis, Godfather, Ann Seaton and Margery Heathfield, Godmothers''.

(The three little girls grew up to womanhood and married. Mary, the eldest was the wife of Charles Eyre, who was knighted and made the first President of Fort William. She died in 1697, and her husband built the mausoleum at Calcutta, which afterwards marked the resting place of her father. Elizabeth, the second, married William Bowridge, and she survived in Calcutta till the year 1753. Catherine, the youngest, became the wife of Jonathan White in the service of the Company. She, like her eldest sister, died young and was buried in 1701. She left a daughter, whom, Mrs. Bowridge took to England with her own child after Mrs. White's death.) \*

The absence of all mention of the mother's name points to the improbability of there ever having been any form of marriage ceremony between the parents. In all the other entries made of baptisms where the children are legitimate, care is observed to give the mother's name. The entry clears the memory of Charnock from the imputations of heathenism, and testifies to his Christianity : for otherwise he surely never would have brought his children to the font in the beautiful Church of St. Mary's.

Hamilton gives Charnock a character for harshness and cruelty towards natives, and speaks scornfully of his choice of a site for the new colony. Considering the treatment Charnock met with from the natives, and the infamous conduct of Ibrahim Khan's predecessor, who caused the Englishman to be severely flogged, it is possible that defaulters met with swift and unflinching retribution at his hands, and that he did not spare the

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\* This paragraph has been given as a note by Mrs. Penny on page 125.

treacherous. But there is nothing to substantiate Hamilton's accusation of cruelty, and it seems to be as unfounded as the other charge of heathenism.

Evans, the chaplain who baptised the little girls was a Welshman ; he had been attached to Charnock's party for some time ; he was with him in his troubles at Hughly and was one of the party carried away by Heath and landed in Madras. He might, of course, at any time, have performed the ceremony at Hughly or Kasimbazar, although there was no church at either place. But the worries and anxieties of life were sufficient to prevent Charnock from paying any attention to domestic matters, and it was not till he reached the Fort that he had leisure to think about such things : even then it is more than probable that Yale, who so frequently interested himself in such affairs, suggested the ceremony, Eleis, who stood sponsor, was an old friend of Charnock's and a member of his Council ; he intended returning to the Bay with his Chief, and consequently would be near his godchildren.

When the site of Calcutta was chosen and the foundations of Fort William were preparing to be laid, the new settlement ranked only as one of the minor Agencies ; Charnock was its first Agent or Chief, and he with two old friends, Francis Ellis and Jeremiah Peachie, formed the first Council of Calcutta. The Council held its first consultation on August 24th, 1690, the day of their landing from Madras ; just half a century after foundation of Fort St. George. The three men who stood on the bare unhealthy strip of land at Chuttanuttee and talked over the new fort, all passed away within a short period of each other. Peachie died in Madras in 1702, Charnock in Calcutta in 1692, and Ellis in 1704. They may well be called the three fathers of Fort William and its wonderful city.

# JOB CHARNOCK — HIS PARENTAGE AND WILL

By

**Sir R.C. Temple, Bt**

Although much has been written concerning the Founder of Calcutta, his origin has hitherto been wrapped in obscurity. It has now been my good fortune to clear up this point. While annotating a series of 17th century letters, written in India and now appearing in *Notes and Queries*,<sup>1</sup> the occurrence in the collection of a letter from Charnock induced me to try to establish his parentage.

Sir George Forrest in his article on Job Charnock<sup>2</sup> gave an abstract of his will. Among the legacies was one to "the poor of the parish of Cree Church, London." This led me to believe that by birth he was a citizen of London, and a search among the wills proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury resulted in the discovery of his father, Richard Charnock.

The will of Richard Charnock<sup>3</sup> is an interesting document and I therefore give it in full.

"IN THE NAME OF GOD AMEN the second day of Aprill Anno Domini one Thousand Six Hundred Sixty Three And in the Fifteenth year of the Reigne of our Sovereigne Lord Charles the Second by the grace of God King of England Scotland France and Ireland defender of the Faith &c. I Richard Charnocke of the parish of St. Mary Woollchurch London Yeoman being in good health of Body and of perfect mind and memory (prayed be God therefore) But considering the Frailty and uncertainty of this present

life Doe therefore) make and ordaine this my present Testament (conteyning therein my last will) in manner and forme following (That is to say)

“First and principally I recommend my soule to Almighty God my maker and Creator hoping and stedfastly believing through his grace and the alone meritts of Jesus Christ my Blessed Saviour and Redeemer to receive full and Free pardon and forgiveness of all my sinnes and life everlasting

“My body I Committ to the Earth to be buried in the parish Church of St. Katherine Creechurch London And my will is That not above the summe of Eight pounds shall be spent upon the Charge of my funerall And I will that all such debts and duties as I shall truly owe to any person or persons att the tyme of after my decease shall be well and truly paid within as short a tyme after my decease as may be conveniently

“And as touching That wordly meanes and estate That it hath pleased Almighty God of his mercy and goodness to bestow upon me (my debts by me oweing and my funerall Charges thereout first paid or deducted) I doe give devise bequeath and dispose thereof in manner and forme following (that is to say)—

“First I give and bequeath upto my sonne Stephen Charnocke All that my messuage Tenement or Inne with the appurtenances comonly called or knowne by the name or signe of the Bell scytuate lying and being in Markett Streete in the County of Bedford And all the land now thereunto belonging and therewith used All which premisses are now

in the tenure of George Sayers or his assignes To have and to hold the same unto my said sonne Stephen Charnock and his assignes for the terme of his naturall life And the Reversion of the said Messuage and Land with the appurtenances expectant after the decease of my said sonne Stephen Charnocke I doe give and devise unto the Parson and Churchwardens of the Parish of Pennerton<sup>4</sup> in the County of Lancaster And to their successors and assignes for ever upon Trust and confidence that out of the Rents thereof the said Parson and Churchwardens and their Successors shall yearly and every yeare forever place out to Apprentice in London Two poore Boyes borne in Hutton<sup>5</sup> in the said parish of Pennerton, or within some other village or place in the same parish

“ITEM I give and bequeath unto my said sonne Stephen Charnocke the summe of Twenty pounds of lawfull money of England And a Trunke with Barres Corded upp with such Lynnen and other things as are or shall be therein att the tyme of my decease

“ITEM I give and bequeath unto my sonne Job Charnocke the summe of six hundred pounds of lawfull money of England

“ITEM I give to my brother William Marsh the summe of Twenty pounds of lawfull money of England And to my sister Mary Marsh his wife the summe of Forty shillings of like money And to each of their Foure Children now at home with them the summe of Forty shillings a peece of like money



“ITEM I give unto Samuell Waters Grocer in Candleweeke Street<sup>6</sup> London the summe of Tenn shillings of like money to buy him a Ring

“ITEM I give unto Mr. Thomas Bateman Merchant sometymes servant to Mr. Michaell Markeland the summe of Six pounds of lawful money of England And unto James Hall Woollan draper in Candleweeke streete aforesaid the like summe of Six pounds of like morey.

THE REST and residue of all and singuler my goods Chattells ready moneyes Plate Leases debts and other things whatsover to me belonging and not before in these presents given and bequeathed I give and bequeath unto my said Two Sonnes Stephen Charnocke and Job Charnocke to be equally devided between them which said Stephen Charnocke and Job Charnocke my sonnes I DOE MAKE ordaine and appoint the full executors of this my present Testament, and Last will

“AND I DOE make nominate and appoint my said brother William Marsh and the said Thomas Bateman and James Hall the Executors of this will in Trust for the benefitt of my said sonnes in case my said sonnes shall be out of England att the tyme of my decease And my will and mind is That if my said sonne Job Charnocke shall happen to depart this life before his returne to England Then the Six hundred pounds to him above herein hequeathed shall be disposed of and accrue as followeth (That is to say) one Hundred pounds thereof shall accrue and come to the Five Children of my said brother William Marsh in equall shares and proportions And the other Five hundred pounds residue

thereof shall come and accrue to my said sonne Stephen Charnocke

“AND my will and mind is that my Executors in Trust in the absence of my sonnes shall have power to put forth any moneys of myne att Interest for the benefit of my sonnes, The bonds for which moneys Soe to be put out shall be taken in the names of my said Executors in Trust and in the Conditions of the same the moneyes shall be expressed to be for the use of my said sonnec And then and in such case if any losse doe happen to my Estate my Executors shall not be therewith Chargeable

“AND I doe hereby revoke all former wills by me made And doe declare This my present Testament to be my very last will and none other IN WITNES whereof I have hereunto sett my hand and seal the day and years First above written.

The marke of the said Richard Charnocke

“Signed sealed Published and declared and delivered by the said Richard Charnocke the Testator as and for his last will and Testament in the presence of John Alsope Sorivener William Braxton and John Bargeman his Servants.”

Probate was granted to Stephen Charnocke on the 2nd June 1665, power being reserved to issue the same to Job, the other execuior, on his return to England.

The Charnocks were a Lancashire faimily. They are said to have assumed the local name of their dwelling places in Leyland Hundred in that country, and to have given them the distinguishing epithets of Charnock Richard, Heath Charnock

and Charnock Gogard. These are all mentioned in the 13th century and the villages of Charnock Richard and Charnock Heath are still so called.

The legacy of Richard Charnock to Penwortham and Hutton indicates that he had cause to be specially interested in those parishes, one of which may have been his birth place. Unfortunately, the early registers of Penwortham, which might have cleared up this point, were destroyed by fire in 1857.

A branch of the Charnock family settled in London and another in Hullcott, Bedfordshire, both in the 16th century. and Richard Charnock, as a London citizen and the owner of property in Bedford, may possibly have been connected with both branches ; but no actual proof is forthcoming.

As regards the relationship between Richard and Job Charnock, there can be no reasonable doubt. No record has been found of any other Job Charnock at this period and the fact that Richard Charnock's younger son was out of England when the will was drawn up goes far to establish his identity with the famous Anglo-Indian. There is moreover, the additional proof in Job's bequest to the poor of the district in which Richard Charnock resided.

The identification of Richard Charnock's elder son Stephen presents rather more difficulty. There is a great temptation to connect him with Stephen Charnock, puritan divine and chaplain to Henry Cromwell (a son of the Protector), and there are several reasons in favour of this theory. The divine was born in the parish of St. Katharine Cree in 1628, where Job also appears to have been born some two or three years later.

Subsequently, Richard Charnock probably removed to the parish of St. Mary Woolchurch<sup>7</sup> where he died. At any rate, the divine's father was also a Richard Charnock. The absence in the will of any allusion to Stephen's profession may be accounted for in two ways. First the chaplain had fallen into ill odour after the Protector's death and he remained in obscurity in London for fifteen years with no regular charge. Secondly, Richard Charnock was probably a Royalist and High Churchman and consequently would have little sympathy with his son's puritanical views. The main obstacle to the identification of the divine with the brother of Job Charnock lies in the statement in Wood's *Athenæ* (ed. Bliss, III, 1234-6) that Stephen's father, Richard Charnock, was "an attorney or solicitor". However, I have searched in vain for any record of a Richard Charnock, solicitor at this period. I have also discovered but one will of a Stephen Charnock<sup>8</sup> and this was proved in 1680, the date given as that of the death of the divine<sup>9</sup>. I am therefore inclined to think that the *Athenæ* must be in error and that Richard Charnock, yeoman, was the father of both Henry Cromwell's chaplain and the founder of Calcutta.

It now only remains to quote the will of Job Charnock who spent at least 37 years of his life in India and ended his days there on the 10th January, 1693. The will was dated from the infant settlement of Chuttanuttee (Sutanati), afterwards to become famous as Calcutta. So far as I am aware, no complete copy of the document has been printed and I therefore give it in full.<sup>10</sup>

IN THE NAME OF GOD AMEN.

"I Job Charnock at present Agent for Affaires of the Right honoble. English East India Company in Bengall

being indisposed in body but perfect and sound in mind and memory doe make and ordaine this to be my last Will and Testament (*Vizt.*)

“Imprimis I bequeath my soul to Almighty God who gave it and my body to be decently burryed at the discretion of my Overseers and for what estate it hath pleased Almighty God to bless me withhall I doe hereby will and bequeath it as followeth.

“Secondly I will and bequeath that all debts or claimes lawfully made on me be discharged by my Overseers.

“Thirdly I give and bequeath to my beloved Friend Daniel Sheldon<sup>11</sup> Esquire Seventy pounds Sterling as a Legacy to buy him a Ring.

“Fourthly I give and bequeath to the honble. Nath (aniel) Higginson<sup>12</sup> as a Legacy to buy him a Ring four hundred Rupees.

“Sixthly I give and bequeath to Mr. John Hill<sup>13</sup> as a Legacy to buy him a Ring two hundred Rupees and that likewise he be paid out of my parte of the permission Trade Commission one hundred Rupees more in all three hundred Rupees.

“Seventhly I give and bequeath to Mr. Francis Ellis<sup>14</sup> as a Legacy to buy him a Ring one hundred and fifty Rupees.”

“Eighthly I doe hereby ordaine and appointed (*sic*) the honble. Nathaniel Higginson President of Madras and Mr. John Beard of Councill in Bengall to be overseers<sup>16</sup> of this my will.

“Ninthly I give and bequeath to the poore of the Parish of Cree Church London the Summe of fifty pounds Sterling.

“Tenthly I give and bequeath to Budlydasse (Badli Das) one hundred Rupees and the meanest sort of my sonns Cloathes lately deceased.

“Eleventhly I give and bequeath to the Doctor now attending me Fifty Rupees.

“Twelfthly I give and bequeath to my Servants Gunnyshams (Ghansyam) and Dallub (Dalab) each twenty Rupees.

“Thirteenthly I give and bequeath after the payment of the abovementioned debts Legacies that all my whole Estate in India and elsewhere be equally given and distributed to my three daughters Mary Elizabeth and Katherine only with this reservation that as an addition to my daughter Marys portion there shall be paid her out of my daughter Eliza (beths) and Katherines two thirds Six hundred pounds Sterling.

“Fourteenthly I will and desire my Overseers before-mentioned that my three daughters be sent with a convenient handsome equipage for England and recommended to the Care of my well beloved friend Daniell Shelton (*sic*) Esqr. in London and that their Estates be invested in goods proper for Europe and sent as by the Right honorable. Companies Permission on as many and such shipps as my Overseers shall think convenient.

“Fifteenthly I hereby acquitt Mr. Charles Pate from his debt to me of Fifty Pagodas lent him at the Fort.<sup>17</sup>

“Lastly I will and ordaine the honoble. Daniell Sheldon and my eldest daughter Mary Charnock to be Executors of this my last will and Testament revoaking and disanulling all former or other Will or Wills that have beene made in witness whereof I have hereunto putt my hand and seale this ninth day of January one thousand Six hundred and ninety two (1692/3).

JOB CHARNOCK

Signed and Sealed in the presence of Jonathan White  
Francis Houghton  
John Hill.”

Probate was granted on the 12th June 1695, to Robert Dorrell, attorney to Mary Charnock, Daniel Sheldon renouncing.

Job Charnock's behest with regard to his daughters' return to England was disregarded. The three girls, children of his native wife, remained in India and married there. Mary became the first wife of Charles Eyre, Charnock's successor as Agent in Bengal. She died on the 19th February, 1697. Elizabeth married William Bowridge, a junior merchant in the Company's service. He died in April, 1724, and his widow survived in Calcutta until August, 1753. Mary Charnock, Job's youngest daughter, married Jonathan White, also a servant of the Company. He became Second of Council and died in Calcutta on the 3rd January, 1704, three years after the death of his young wife.

It is interesting to trace the fate of Job Charnock's bequest to the poor of his native parish.

A vestry minute of St. Katharine Cree of the 28th August, 1695, records the gift of "Mr. Job Charnock, late of the East Indies, merchant, of 50 *l.* to the poor of this parish," and further states that it was ordered at that vestry, that "in consideration of the said 50 *l.* the poor should have distributed amongst them 3 *l.* yearly, for ever, by two equal payments, upon the 5th November and 5th February."

At a subsequent vestry, held on the 1st February, 1699, it was ordered that "the 50 *l.* given to the parish for the use of the poor by Mr. Job Charnock, and the 100 *l.* given for the like use by Mr. John Jackson should be settled on the house belonging to the parish, situate in Fenchurch-street, and the said house was thereby charged with the repayment thereof, with five per cent. interest, such interest being 7 *l.* 10 *s.*, to be yearly paid for the use of the poor.<sup>18</sup>

In 1860, the house No. 91, Fenchurch-street, was let on lease to John Moore for a term of 21 years from Christmas, 1849, at the rent of £ 42 per annum, and Charnock's £ 2.10 interest was carried to the bread account for the distribution of twenty 2 lb. loaves to 20 persons every Sunday.

For the later history of the bequest I am indebted to Mr. Henry Bowyear, Chief Charity Commissioner, who informs me that "The house, No. 91, Fenchurch-street, was taken under the provisions of Michael Angelo Taylor's Act (57 Geo. III. c. XXIX) and the purchase money was paid into Court and was represented by a sum of £ 1,949-10-8 Consols. By the statement prepared under the City of London Parochial Charities Act, 1883, for the Parish of St. Katharine Cree, this sum is scheduled as the endowment of the three Charities of Richard



Lingham, Job Charnock and John Jackson, and by the operation of that Act and the Central Scheme made thereunder, on the 23rd February, 1891, it was merged in the Central Fund of the City Parochial Foundation.”

1. Correspondence of Richard Edwards, 1669-78 (N. & Q. from Jan. 1917)
2. *Blackwood's Magazine*, June, 1902, pp 771-782
3. Wills, P.C.C., 58 Hyde
4. Penwortham, a parish in the Hundred of Leyland, Lancaster, two miles S.W. of Preston.
5. A township in Penwortham containing a free grammar school.
6. Candlewick Street, at the east end of “Great Eastcheape,” now known as Cannon Street.
7. The church of St. Mary Woolchurch was not rebuilt after the great fire of 1666. Its site was roughly that of the present Mansion House.
8. Wills, P.C.C., 92 Bath.
9. See the article on Stephen Charnock in the *DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY*.
10. Wills, P.C.C., 91 Irby.
11. Chief at Kasimbazar, 1658-1665. He returned to England in 1666.
12. Governor of Fort St. George, Madras, 1692-98.
13. Captain John Hill, “Secretary and Captain of the Soldiers”, see Yule, *HEDGES' DIARY*, II, 92.

14. Then Second of Council at Hugli. He died at Fort St. George in 1704.
15. Governor of Bengal, 1701-1710.
16. Executors in Bengal.
17. Fort St. George, Madras.
18. *Reports made to the Charity Commissioners, Accounts and Papers* (H. of C. Vols, 71 and 334 of 1904).

# JOB CHARNOCK, THE FOUNDER OF CALCUTTA, AND THE ARMENIAN CONTROVERSY

By

**H.W.B. Moreno<sup>1</sup>**

Quite a controversy has circled round the name of Job Charnock, whether he was the founder of Calcutta or not. The Armenians have pointed out, with pardonable pride, that to them must be given the honour as the founders of the city, for they had a settlement in Sutanuti, the site of modern Calcutta, long before Job Charnock landed at, what was to be known afterwards as, Calcutta. Certain Englishmen have shown a tendency to support the theory of the Armenian founding of Calcutta ; and if they have not done so openly and avowedly they have certainly done so in a manner that casts a shade of discredit on the Job Charnock theory. That eminent antiquarian, the late Professor C.R. Wilson, M.A., writing in the *Englishman* (Calcutta) as far back as the 31st January 1895 under the heading "Armenian Founders of Calcutta," has stated that "it is gratifying to learn that the efforts which have recently been made by various enquirers and in various ways to push back the history of Calcutta to the remoter past, before the formation of the English settlement under Job Charnock, have not been altogether without fruit. By slow degrees evidences are being accumulated which tend to connect Calcutta with earlier traders and to prove that even before the building of Fort William the place was not without importance." After reviewing the evidences in favour of the Armenians being the founders of Calcutta, the learned professor concludes his arguments in a half-

certain manner, couched in the form of a question : “Was there already,” he asks, “an Armenian settlement here ? Are the Armenians, after all, the founders of the city ?” This attempt, by no means far reaching in its consequence, to upset the Job Charnock theory would have died a natural death had not quite recently Mr. L.S.S. O’Malley, I.C.S., in charge of the Census operations in Bengal, resuscitated the question in a still more dubious form. Dealing with the Armenians as one of the communities in Bengal, Mr. O’Malley points out that they had a settlement in Sutanuti (the site of modern Calcutta) at least 60 years before the foundation of Calcutta by Job Charnock. There is no open avowal here, but from this statement the inference may be drawn that the Armenians, in some sense of the word, founded Calcutta, or what became known as Calcutta afterwards, long before Job Charnock landed and dreamed his dreams of foundation. To remove any such doubt and clear the ground as far as may be, a careful survey is necessary of all the evidence pertaining thereto.

For the theory of the Armenian foundation of Calcutta what is the evidence in support ? It pivots round an inscription on a tomb in the Armenian Churchyard of Calcutta bearing a date which, on translation, corresponds with the English Calendar reckoning, as the 11th of July 1630 A.D. which is certainly anterior to Job Charnock’s final landing in Calcutta, after a series of adventures, at noon on Sunday, the 24th August 1690 when the city may be said to have been actually founded. To have the evidence *in extenso* as to the Armenian foundation of the city, one is forced to quote largely from that able treatise, “The History of the Armenians in India” by Mr. Mesrobian J. Seth. It says :— “Prior to the days of Job Charnock and his founding of Calcutta in 1690 the Armenians, whose love of commerce has

always been proverbial, had formed a small commercial settlement in the village of Sutanuti, corresponding with the native portion of Calcutta traversed by Chitpore Road. Hautkhola Ghat was then known as *Sutanuti* Ghat. Though this statement regarding the early settlement of the Armenians in Calcutta might be questioned by zealous critics and antiquarians, it is supported by monumental evidence which places its accuracy beyond all doubt. The writer (Mr. Mesrobian J. Seth) has lately brought to light an interesting inscription in the Armenian language, on a tombstone in the Armenian Churchyard of Calcutta bearing date the 11th July 1630 A.D. of which the following is a *verbatim* translation :—

“This is the tomb of Rezabeebah, wife of the late charitable Sookeas, who departed from this world to life eternal on the 21st day of Nakha (11th July, in the year 15 (New Era of Julfa = 1630 A.D.)”.<sup>2</sup>

“That the Armenians had established themselves in Calcutta before the arrival of Job Charnock, is evident from the date of the above inscription which is beyond doubt the oldest in Calcutta. The authenticity of the date might be questioned on the ground that the present Armenian Church was not at that time in existence, having been erected in the year 1724. Its site was the old Armenian burying-ground. Previous to 1724 the Armenians worshipped in a small chapel, built of timber, about a hundred yards to the south of the present church. This Armenian inscription upsets the ordinarily accepted account of the history of Calcutta prior to the British settlement, for it dates as far back as 1630, or about 60 years before Job Charnock, the East India Company’s Agent, set foot in Calcutta and hoisted the British flag on the banks of the Hooghly on that memorable day, the 24th of August 1690.”

What are then the salient points for discussion as found in this review of the theory of the Armenian foundation of Calcutta? First, that the Armenians settled for the purpose of commerce in the village of Sutanuti, next that they “worshipped in a small chapel, built, of timber,” therein situated, and lastly, that in 1630 A.D., corresponding by calculation to a certain year in the Armenian Calendar, there was erected the tomb of one “Rezabeebah the wife of the late charitable Sookeas”. Taking the second point first it must be asserted that the “small chapel, built of timber” was nowhere in existence in 1630 A.D. Its erection took place when it was built for them by the Hon’ble East India Company in 1689, in accordance with the agreement made with them in 1688, through that born diplomatist and leader of men, the Armenian Khoja Phanoos Kalendar, through whose good influence many far-reaching privileges were granted by the Company. It is interesting to note the terms of the order. It runs :—

“Whenever forty or more of the Armenian Nation shall become inhabitants of any garrisons, cities or town belonging to the Company in the East Indies, the said Armenians shall not only enjoy the free use and exercise of their religion, but there shall also be allotted to them a parcel of ground to erect a Church thereon for worship and service of God in their own way. And that we (this led to the putting up of “small chapel built of timber”) “which afterwards the said Armenians may alter and build with stone, or solid materials to their own good liking.” (This was subsequently done and the present Armenian Church of St. Nazareth was erected in 1724 not far from the site occupied by the timber-built chapel). “And the said Governor and the Company will also fifty pounds per annum, during the space of

seven years, for maintenance of such priest or minister as they shall chose to officiate therein, Given under the Company's Larger Seal, etc., June 22, 1488."

Having disposed of the second point as to the date of the erection of the timber-built chapel, the first and last points may be taken together, namely, the settlement of the Armenians at Sutanuti long before the advent of Job Charnock and tomb of Rezabcebah bearing the date equivalent to the English year 1632 A.D. That the Armenians traded with the people of India long before the British touched its shores is undoubted. As far back as 780 A.D. it is said that one Thomas Cana landed on the Malabar Coast. He is better known by the name of Mar Thomas. At this time Shoo Ram was ruler of Cranganore. Thirsting for trade and laden with attractive stuffs from where they came the Armenians marched the length and breadth of India bartering their wares, and in many cases amassing considerable wealth. But were they settlers in the real sense of the word? Was their purpose that of acquiring settlement in India and abiding therein or were they merely itinerant traders? On this point it seems the whole discussion hinges. If they owned settlements and treated them as exclusively theirs, they may rightly be said to have settled in India. Austin in describing ownership (cf. Jurisprudence II, p. 477, also of. III p. 2) points out that it is a right "over a determinate thing, indefinite in point of user, unrestricted in point of disposition and unlimited in point of duration." Were the Armenians, in the light of this definition, owners of Sutanuti? It is to be feared they were not. They have been at the village, they may have resided there, they may have even buried their dead so long as they abided there, but did that give them ownership?

The Armenians settled as traders in Benares, in Patna and Behar, in the last of which places they buried their dead, erecting tombstones over them, some of which are preserved to this day ; in Sydabad and Chinsurah they resided more permanently and effected much good in the erection of public places of worship and almshouses, not to speak of other munificent donations they gave in the cause of charity, but nowhere is it mentioned or claimed that they had settlements there. They came and went as other traders before and after them had done. Indeed, if mere trade with the inhabitants of a village may count as evidence as to the foundation of a city, the Portuguese had long forestalled the Armenians in the founding of Calcutta, for we read that the Port of the future Calcutta was early known to the Portuguese whose galleons from 1530 onwards anchored there for the purpose of transferring cargo to the country craft that lay all around (cf. Sir W. Hunter's *The Thackerays in India ; Some Calcutta Graves*, p. 38). The erection then of a single tomb, however ancient it may be, by itself, affords but slender evidence for the founding of a city, for "Rezabeebah" may have been "the wife of the charitable Sookeas" who in the English year 1630 A.D. may have lost her while she devotedly shared with him his perilous journeys as a trader, and, who to honour her pious memory may have erected this tombstone which has so long withstood the ravages of wind and rain and the other obliterating elements of the destructive climate of Lower Bengal.

On the other hand what is the evidence as to the founding of Calcutta by Job Charnock ? In 1655 or about 1656 Job Charnock sailed for India. In 1680, when he had married his Hindu wife, whose memory he cherished long after death by an anniversary sacrifice of a cock on her tomb, he was promoted



to the more central charge of the Company's house of business near the modern Murshidabad, with the claim to succeed as chief of all the factories in Bengal at Hugli town. Harassed on all sides by foreign foes and misjudged by his masters, the Directors of the Company in England, he slipped away from Hugli town in 1686, dropped down the river twenty-seven miles and anchored in the long deep pool opposite Sutanati Hat, or Cotton Thread Mart, a mere hamlet, a bazar of mat huts. For four months he laboured to form a settlement there on the low bank of the river and even hoped for permission to build a fort. His one thought was to make his masters the owners of the settlement against all others, but he failed in the beginning, for the odds were against him; and the founding of Calcutta dates not with the year 1686 or 1687 for the reason that there was no English settlement established in the place at that time. The Moghul forces began to press upon him and his small garrison; and he was compelled to fortify himself at Hugli on the east bank of the river which place proving equally unsuccessful, he tried another, Ulubaria, "the abode of owls", half way up the river. Thwarted on all sides, after undergoing all sorts of privations and dangers in his wanderings, Job Charnock with his Council and Factors landed for the third and last time at the Cotton Mart, by noon, on Sunday, the 24th of August 1690. In their Consultation Book, bearing that date, it is mentioned they "found the place in a deplorable condition, nothing being left for our present accommodation, and the rain falling day and night." Yet from this date begins the actual founding of Calcutta for the English by Job Charnock for henceforward he permanently established himself therein, raising fortifications for its defence and guarding the settlement for the English. Scrambling up the mud bank at that time with an emaciated guard of only thirty soldiers, he maintained his position against all odds,

and Calcutta, then the haunt of malaria, the abode of the wild hog, the buffalo and the tiger, by dint of perseverance and the dogged energy of its founder grew to be, for many years after, the British capital of India, and is even now the largest city of the Indian Empire.

The early history of Calcutta is begemmed with the heroic deeds of its intrepid founder ; all through the merciless rains of 1690 he struggled on. Opposed by Indians, by Frenchmen and even by his own countrymen he plodded on in the founding of the settlement, till his labour seemed nought more than the outcome of foolish obstinacy. Yet Calcutta grew apace. Sir William Hunter describing those stirring times goes on to mention how the place "once fortified, its position secured it on three sides from attack. Its deep harbour attracted the trade from the Dutch and French settlements on the shallow reaches higher up the river, and the native merchants began to crowd to a place where they felt safe. It was perceived that a few armed ships in the Calcutta pool could cut off the upper settlement from the sea. But the fever-haunted swamp which stretched beyond the high river bank exacted a terrible price for its prosperity. The name of Calcutta, taken from a neighbouring Hindu shrine, was identified by mariners with Golgotha — the place of skulls. By the middle of 1692 they had made firm their footing. Within a decade after Charnock finally landed on the deserted river bank in 1690, it had become a mart with 1,250 European inhabitants, of whom 450 were buried between the months of August and January in one year. The miseries of the fever-stricken land throughout 1690 and 1691 are not to be told in words."

On the 10th January 1693 Charnock went to his grave a sorrowing man misjudged by those who should have honoured

him for his noble work. He lies buried in the cemetery of the Old Cathedral (St. John's Church), a fit resting-place for one who had laid the foundations of the city in the years gone by. As the inscription over his tomb asserts, he was a sojourner "*qui postquam in solo non suo peregrinatus esset diu, reversus est domum suae acternitatis*" (a wanderer, who after sojourning for a long time in a land not his own, returned to his Eternal Home).

No one will refuse the credit due to the Armenians who were the forerunners of the British, as merchants and tradesmen in India; no one will deny that they have stood loyally by the British in all times of necessity and trouble, giving of their best and manfully fighting and dying to establish British supremacy in India; but if the founding of a city be more than the mere trading with people, if it be the ownership of its soil, the armed protection of its inhabitants and the establishment of a centre where citizens may come and go without fear of rapine, then the palm for the founding of Calcutta must unhesitatingly be awarded to Job Charnock, who lies peacefully within its pale, while on all sides is the hum and commotion of its busy thoroughfares, while round about rise buildings upon buildings, magnificent in structure and stately in appearance, which go to make up the one-time metropolis of India, a glorious city which in the dim distant days he so heroically founded. (From the CALCUTTA REVIEW for April 1915 — No. 280 — pp 207-215)

#### Notes :—

1. Mr H.W.B. Moreno, the author, was attached to the Armenian College, Calcutta.
2. "The New Era of Julfa in this year of grace (1895) is 280 and is known amongst us (the Armenians) as the "Era of

Azarea," after one Azarea who reformed the Calendar. This era dates from the founding of the city of Julfa, a suburb of Ispahan and the headquarters of the Armenians in Persia, where they have settled since the days of Shah Abbas the Great, in the early part of the Seventeenth Century."

# THE MAUSOLEUM OF JOB CHARNOCK

By

**The Rev. H. B. Hyde**

The Charnock Mausoleum in St. John's Churchyard is a massive structure, octagonal in form with a double dome. In each face there is a low and narrow archway. It was placed so as immediately to form the original entrance to the Burying-ground, which opened north of it. It is fair to assume that the date of the structure which has every appearance of great antiquity, is that of the cutting of the inscription in memory of Job Charnock himself. This date is ascertainable within narrow limits. There are 4 black stone slabs now within the tomb, two of them certainly removed thither from other parts of the ground. Of the remaining two, one, of surprising thickness, is to the memory of Catherine White, the youngest daughter of Job, who died on the 21st January 1700/1 ; to this slab a fellow is found outside the mausoleum, exactly like it in size and details of ornament: this latter is to the memory of Jonathan White, 2nd of Council, Catherine's husband, who died January 3rd, 1703/4. It is one of 30 or more monumental slabs which were removed from other parts of ground when the ruinous tombs were dismantled in 1802. As Catherine's epitaph and this one must have originally been set close together, we may therefore reject her's from being, as is usually supposed, one of the proper occupants of the mausoleum. It must be acknowledged that this slab of Catherine is so strikingly like, both in

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\* The Rev. Hyde's "Note on the Mausoleum of Job Charnock and the bones recently discovered within it", appeared in the PROCEEDINGS OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL, January-December, 1893, pp 78-83.

size and ornament, to that of her father, beside which it is now fixed upright, that it would never to the casual observer, especially if he had noticed her husband's epitaph outside, that the memorials of Job and Catherine were not originally intended to be side by side to. A closer observer will readily detect a striking difference in the style of lettering.

One slab only therefore now remains for consideration that which bears the name of the Father of Calcutta himself. This slab contains two inscriptions, the former is to Job Charnock, who died January 10th, 1692/3, and the latter to his eldest daughter, Mary, wife of Charles Eyre, Charnock's next successor but one in the Bengal agency; she died on February 19th, 1696/7. A close inspection of this slab and comparison of the lettering of the two inscriptions make it abundantly plain that they are not contemporaneous works but that the lower half of the slab had been purposely left blank to receive such an inscription as it now exhibits. Thus, the mausoleum with originally one epitaph must have been completed some time prior to the year 1697, and the addition made to it prior to the early part of 1698 when Mr. Eyre returned home, for it is to be presumed, from the terms of the epitaph, that he was at the time when it was written actually "perfect of the English". It is true he returned in 1700 and for a few months resumed his former charge, but it was with the title of knighthood which does not distinguish his name in the epitaph.

Charles Eyre, as Charnock's son-in-law, and successor in the agency, is the likeliest person to have erected the mausoleum. It is possible that he may have done so at the charge of the Company, for the Court had certainly a very high opinion of the worth of its old servant, but no evidence of this is forth-

coming, and it is likely that so exceptional a testimonial of good opinion as the dedication to his memory of this costly monument by the Company would have found some expression in the epitaph.

As an argument that the mausoleum is not likely to have been built within a good twelve month and more of Charnock's death, may be adduced the disorderly condition of the factory at that period. On the 12th August 1693, Sir John Goldsborough the Company's Supervisor, Commissary General and Chief Governor in East India, visited the settlement, and has left an account of the deplorable state of affairs he found there. Charnock's place was filled by Mr. Francis Ellis, an old servant of the Company, who had done nothing to reform the licentious and riotous living of the resident English which had strangely disgraced the two years and five months of Charnock's government of his new settlement. These disorders require some explanation, seeing that Charnock in Hugli and Kasimbazar was certainly a man of will and of honour in his discharge of his duty towards his masters. They may be partly explained by supposing that his physical and mental constitution had, after an abnormally long and trying residence in Bengal, at length broken down. An indolence crept over him which became marked by a timorous tinge to his former self-reliant character. The expectation of the formation of the rival company daunted him. "The law courts at Madras scared him exceedingly, so that he was afraid to think of meddling with any body". Everyone did that which seemed good in his own eyes". He never even planned out the premises of a factory: everyone built houses, enclosed lands, or dug tanks just as and when he chose. Tradition, as it came to Captain Hamilton a few years later, said that he loved to inflict the *chaubuk* on his native

subordinates for transgression of his arbitrary commands, and that "the execution was generally done when he was at dinner, so near his dining room that the groans and cries of the poor delinquents served him for music". Some said he turned heathen and sacrificed a fowl on the grave of his native wife at each anniversary of her death. Sir John Goldsborough asserts that he developed a fancy for encouraging quarrels between his subordinates; and leaving his business affairs in the hands of the captain of his little garrison, (now reduced to a sergeant, two drummers and twenty sepoys), he used to amuse himself with the help of the said sergeant in arranging duels out of the quarrels he had fomented while the worshipful agent led the disorders, the Captain pandered to the debaucheries. He kept, without being required to pay the fees for a licence, a public punch-house and billiard table, and he let his wife turn papist without control.

It is quite likely that in the markedly devout mould in which Charnock's epitaph is couched, we should trace a strain of vindication on Eyre's part as against detractors of the estimable quality which marked his father-in law's true character ere his mind became clouded in his last two years. It is remarkable that the epitaph attributes his Christian burial to the will of the deceased himself and the Christian hope expressed is uttered in Charnock's name.

The epitaph reads as follows :—

D. O. M.

Jobus Charnock, Armiger  
 Anglus, et nup in hoc  
 regno Bengalensi dignissim, Anglorum  
 Agens. Mortalitatis suae exuvias



sub hoc marmore deposuit, ut  
in spe beatae resurrectionis ad  
Christi judicis adventum obdormirent.  
Qui postquam in solo non  
Suo peregrinatus esset dice.  
Reversus est domum suae aeter-  
nitatis decimo die Januarii 1692.

Mr. Eyre took charge of the agency on the 25th January 1693/4, and since the inscription on the slab was *in situ*, with its lower half vacant in February 1696/7 the erection of the mausoleum cannot therefore be dated many months earlier or later than the year 1695. One may certainly therefore claim it to be the oldest example of British masonry now existing in Calcutta. The original Fort William itself was not begun till 1696 and was 3 years in building.

In the year 1696, then, we may assume the mausoleum stood as we see it now and contained within it a table monument bearing on its upper face the black slab with the inscription, brought, it is usually thought, from Madras. We may assume that the monument was a table shape from the fact that the slab is worked in mouldings on the underside of its edge, suggesting that it was to project somewhat all round beyond a base of masonry.

There can be no doubt therefore that whoever else may have been afterwards interred within the great tomb, the body of Charnock must have occupied the central position. It had been the general impression derived from the resonance of the floor of the mausoleum when struck by the foot about the centre that it contained a hollow vault. This floor having become decayed

and the whole edifice being in November last under repair by the Department of Public Works, it was thought well to take advantage of the opportunity before a new floor was put in and ascertain by some small excavations whether such a vault existed or not. Legend affirmed that Charnock had been interred in the same grave with his native wife, and the vault might contain some evidence in support or refutation of this legend, or perchance coffin-plates or other objects that might afford historical interest. About 4 feet of earth was accordingly opened but no trace of a vault appeared except that the quantity of bricks mixed up with the earth suggested that a brick grave had originally existed which might have been destroyed when Mr. Eyre opened the tomb to lay the remains of his wife Catherine beside those of her father in February 1696/7. The excavation was then ordered to be stopped, but through some misunderstanding it was continued. On visiting the mausoleum next morning, viz., on Tuesday, the 22nd of November last, I found that the grave had been opened to a depth of fully six feet, at which depth the diggers had stopped having met with a trace of human remains. The excavation was somewhat smaller than an ordinary grave and lay E. and W. in the centre of the floor. At the bottom of it the workmen had cleared a level, at the western end of which they were beginning to dig a little deeper when a bone became visible. This bone was left *in situ*, undisturbed, and the digging had ceased on its discovery. On seeing this bone I felt sure it could be no other than one of the bones of the left fore-arm of the person buried which must have lain crossed upon the breast. A little beyond it I observed a small object in the earth which I took at first for a large coffin nail, but on this being handed up to me, it was apparent that it was the largest joint, of probably a middle finger, and that, judging

from its position relatively to the bone, of the left hand. This bone I replaced. I permitted no more earth to be removed save only a little above and to the east of the remains, sufficient to reveal a black stratum in the soil which might have been the decayed coffin-lid. It was quite evident that a few more strokes of the spade would discover the rest of the skeleton, perhaps perfect after just 200 years of burial. There can be no reasonable doubt, but that arguing from the position of the body and the depth at which it lay, it was the very one to enshrine which only, the mausoleum was originally built, the mortal part of the Father of Calcutta himself.

Having seen what I did, I had the grave filled in, for I feared to leave it open lest the coolies might ransack its contents in search of rings or other valuables, and further I felt it improper, in view of the interest which must attach to such investigation, to permit to continue it alone. If it were to be prosecuted at all it should at least be in presence of a representative company of Englishmen. For my own part with the bones of the famous pioneer's hand accidentally discovered before me and the strange and solemn statement of his epitaph just above them that he had laid his mortal remains there himself "*ut in spe beatae resurrectionis ad Christi judicis adventum obdormirent,*" I felt strongly restrained from examining them further

The discovery was, at once duly reported to the several heads of the civil and ecclesiastical departments of Government within whose jurisdiction it had been made.

The bones disclosed lie at a depth of six feet below the middle of a line drawn upon the floor between the innermost western edge of the S.W. and N.W. entrance to the mausoleum.

The epitaph added beneath Job Charnock's is :—

Pariter jacet

Maria Jobi Primogenita Caroli Eyre Anglorum

hicce Praefecti conjux Charissima,

Quae obiit 19 die Februarii A.D. 1696/7.

That on the slab now beside the former is :—

Hic Jacet

Catherine White

Dominæ Jonathanis White, uxor dilectissima et Тов Макапитов

Jobi Charnock

filia natu minima ;

quae primo in partu et aetatis flore

Annum agens urum de viginte :

Mortem obiit heu ! immaturam 21 Januarii 1700/1.

Siste parumper, Christiane Lector

(Vel quis es tandem) et mecum defle

Duram sexus muliebris sortem

Qui per elapsa tot annorum millia

Culpam primæ Evæ luit Parentis

Et luet usque ; Dum aeternum stabit

In dolore paries filios.— Genesis iii.16.

—————

# THE PETROLOGY OF JOB CHARNOCK'S TOMBSTONE

By

**Thomas H. Holland, A.R.C.S., F.G.S.,**

Geological Survey of India.

(Received August 29th (1893), Read November 1st)

At the suggestion of the Rev. H.B. Hyde, I recently examined the tombstone preserved in the 'Charnock Mausoleum', St. John's Churchyard, to the memory of Job Charnock †. Apart from its historic interest, the rock itself, being of a type hitherto undescribed, is of sufficient scientific value to call for a description.

The abundance of blue quartz, the occasional crystals of garnet, the black, and sometimes bronzy-looking, pyroxene, and the cleavage faces of the felspars are characters which are at once striking features in the hand-specimen.

Under the microscope, the rock is seen to be granitic in structure; that is, it is perfectly crystalline throughout, with the crystals mutually interlocked, and the intergrowth so perfect that in places a beautiful micro-pegmatitic structure results. The following minerals can be identified (1) Quartz, (2) Orthoclase (Microcline), (3) Plagioclase, (4) Hypersthene, (5) Garnet, and (6) Magnetite.

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\* From the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol LXII Part II 1893

† Job Charnock died in 1693 and the tombstone was erected about two years later.

(1) *The Quartz-Crystals* are crowded with minute acicular inclusions, the structure of which cannot be made out with the microscope; they are arranged without discoverable regularity: and are probably the cause of the blue colour seen in hand-specimens. Blue quartz-crystals have been noticed before in granites and granitites, as in that from Rumburg in Sweden.

(2) *Orthoclase and Microcline.* Most of the potash-felspars show the remarkable and unmistakable microcline structure. Occasionally also the orthoclase is seen presenting the “*streifige*” appearance due to regularly arranged intergrowths with a plagioclase, giving rise to the structure described by Becke as micro-perthitic. To prove the identity of this felspar, I have isolated crystals having a specific gravity of 2.59, and examined them chemically by Szabo’s method.

(3) *Plagioclase* occurs only in small quantities. The isolated crystals show the characteristic twinning, with extinction—angles approaching those of oligoclase.

(4) *Hypersthene* occurs, not in large quantities, but presenting its characteristic pleochroism and straight extinction. The presence of this mineral is a feature of exceptional interest from the fact that, so far as I am aware, a hypersthene-granite has never been recorded, although the mineral has been frequently found as a constituent of the intermediate, basic and ultra-basic holocrystalline rocks. The precise reasons why the micas, hornblendes, and, more rarely, augites should occur as the ferromagnesian constituents of granites, and not hypersthene, have never been accurately settled. The discovery of hypersthene, therefore, in this capacity fills a very well-marked gap in the granitic series, and for the time we can do no more than record

as precisely as possible its nature and mode of occurrence, with the hope that in future the facts may be of service in framing an hypothesis for explaining the fact that chemically similar magmas, under special conditions of temperature and pressure during the process of consolidation, give rise to different mineral species.

(5) *Garnet* of the almandine variety occurs very sparingly in the rock, and seldom shows anything approaching idiomorphic crystalline form.

(6) *Magnetite* in small grains is sparsely scattered amongst the other minerals.

The rock has a *specific gravity* of 2.646, agreeing thus with normal granites.

In microscopic and macroscopic characters this rock agrees with certain specimens which I have recently collected in the Madras Presidency. At different places in the south of India (Pallavaram in the Chingleput district, the Shevaroy and Nilgiri hills, in N.W. Madura and in Travancore) there occur exposures of igneous rock in which hypersthene is a constant constituent, and which at the same time exhibit every gradation in acidity, from hypersthene-granite, the most silicious (acid), to pyroxenite the most basic. These rocks, although their exposures are now separated by such distances from one another I believe to have been derived from a common molten magma: they belong to one "petrographical province", and the differentiation of the originally homogeneous molten material into masses so widely distinct in chemical composition can be shown to be in agreement with well-established, though recent, physical principles.

The massive rocks of the Nilgiri Hills, and the Shevaroyes, as well as the similar rocks found in the localities mentioned above, have been hitherto regarded as belonging to the great metamorphic series of the South. Observations made during recent visits to the Madras Presidency have, however, convinced me that this series, together with certain others not now under discussion, must be looked upon as intrusive igneous rocks of younger age than the normal gneiss.

The evidences for these conclusions I hope shortly to produce in detail. For the present, however, we are concerned in identifying Job Charnock's tombstone with the hypersthene-granites of the Madras Presidency ; and from its proximity to the coast and to Madras, it seems likely that Pallavaram would have been selected by the earlier agents of the East India Company as a source of this handsome rock.

Nearly all the old tombstones collected together in St. John's Churchyard are of the same rock ; for example that of Job Charnock's son-in-law, Jonathan White (1703), and Mrs. Jane Smart (1753).

Briefly, the points in which these rocks agree with those of Pallavaram, and upon which I base this identification are these :—

(a) *Structure*

- (1) Micro-perthitic structure
- (2) Granophyric (micro-pegmatitic) structure.

(b) *Composition*

- (1) The presence of potash-felspar in the form microcline



- (2) The presence of hypersthene
- (3) „ „ blue quartz.
- (4) „ „ almandine garnet.

(c) *The Combination* of these minerals with the above-named structures. In this association hypersthene is especially noteworthy for the reason already stated.

As this is a new type of rock, and modifications of it occur by the introduction of accessory minerals I would suggest for it the name *Charnockite*, in honour of the founder of Calcutta, who was the unconscious means of bringing, perhaps, the first specimen of this interesting rock to our capital. (pp. 162-164)

*Part—II*

**JOB CHARNOCK — IN FICTION**



## CHARNOCK'S PROPHETIC SOLILOQUY

*(From a fragment which ought to have been picked up near a marble slab on a club gate post in Chowringhee :—)*

Hail to the last asylum !  
Hail to the wanderer's haven !  
Hail to the rents that rise sky-high  
And the path that's still unpaven —  
Here hard by Boytaconnah  
Under Sealdah's height,  
All in the land of Materam —  
Is fixed the glorious site.  
Hurrah ! for the great City  
That stretches many a mile —  
Hurrah ! for gallant merchantmen  
Who passing make their pile :—  
Thine Briton. is the pilum,  
Briton, the pile is thine,  
The ordered line of stock and share —  
The corn and oil and wine.

There, where the leopard ranges  
On Howrah's further shore,  
The flare from endless flues shall rise  
For endless looms that roar ;—  
And here, by miles of jetties,  
Some day the dust shall foam  
'Fore the bright eyes of wives and girls  
Whose berths are booked for home.

All hail ! to Clives stout pilum,  
All hail ! the Income-tax  
All hail ! the cheun of worth that winds

For Madame Grand to “Max” ;—  
 Now by the scented maidan  
 The motor-bus is seen —  
 And clubs and pubs — where tiger-cubs  
 Made frolic on the green.

Blast, and thrice blast, the Briton  
 Who sees Ind’s proudest day —  
 Who sees this big malodorous swamp  
 Start on its wondrous way —  
 Here, ’neath this spreading *peepul* —  
 Big me the future probe —  
 That booms the everlasting fame  
 Of Capitalian Job.

— DAK

## JOB CHARNOCK OF THE MID-DAY HALT

(24th August 1690)

The warring shires with strife were torn,  
     And England’s King stood sore in need,  
 When, to an English home, was born  
     A child of rock hewn birth and breed.

They named him Job before the Lord—  
     — Job Charnock — at a font unknown,  
 While crop-eared might with lifted sword  
     Frowned forward by a self-broke throne.

Was it a kneeling mother thought  
     On him of old who walked upright,  
 Who spoke with God, and ever wrought  
     Up-standing in his Maker’s sight ?

Ere Moses dashed the Law in twain  
At sight of Israel's molten kine  
In herding Uz was fashioned plain  
The role of His acclaimed design

Clear called from out the bolt-ripped cloud  
To flinch not though the mountains jar,  
And the proud dark, colossal, shroud  
The rightness of the things that are.

Said Job of Time's unshackled dawn  
Saw Sabea smite and cursed not fate.  
He held the hand that rocks the morn  
And wakes the chambers of the gate.

And counting darts but stubble, knew  
To deem as nought the shaking spear,  
The habergeon to eschew  
And front high wrath with kingly fear.

And Job of England took the thread  
Of fate as spun at Heaven's command,  
And knew the slings of doubt and dread  
But deep things out of darkness planned.

Perchance, his sire on Naseby sward  
Saw England's lion standard shine,  
And heard the shouts for church and lord  
Ring all along the charging line.

Then saw the stallion squadrons reel  
At shock of pike and thrust of blade,  
And, thwarted by a wall of steel,  
Resistless Rupert all unmade --

The flank flecked manless steeds in flight,  
The shatterad lance, the dinted mail,  
A mob-led kingdom madly right,  
And Rupert's ride without avail.

For who shall scan His wisdom dread ?  
The paddling droves of Uz delight,  
To greet the war-star's panes red  
That blush the sky-scape of the night.

Job's youth is set behind the reach  
Of seeking ones who probe and plod.  
Mayhap, he heard the tinker teach  
The pilgrim way that leads to God.

And crossed the slough by Christian's side  
And met the lions, face to face,  
And fought, with him, Despair and Pride —  
Great-hearted to the stool of Grace.

(Who thinks to-day on Bedford town —  
On Bedford bridge and reedy stream,  
Or heeds to take the old tome down  
To con the glorious tinker's dream ?)

Mayhap, he watched by Whitehall gate  
Blunt Oliver, uncrowned of men,  
Full sceptred in a coach and eight —  
With Milton of the seraph pen.

And shouted from the kerb-stone throng,  
The While the palfreys pranced in line,  
And thought on that majestic song  
Of Ormiz and Golconda's mine.

How Salem's courts of lattice laced  
    Loud fluttered as the peacocks preened  
For silken girls, who laughing, graced  
    The rose zananas, ivory screened.

What time the poet ruler strode,  
    Arm laden, to the scented room,  
And tossed to white gemmed hands the load  
    Of woven foam from Dacca's loom.

And mused on Jehan's marble dream,—  
    High altar of a sleepless love—  
The bubble dome—the yellow stream—  
    The towers that top the cypress grove.

And heard the East a call at thought  
    Of all the apes that swung serene  
On Olivet from Ophir brought  
    For pearl-roped Sheba's wistful queen.

Who hears the East a-call, must rise  
    And follow fast, in spite of fears, —  
Though in her lurking glance there lies  
    The sadness of a thousand years.

The pilot gone, they slipped the Nore,  
    And left the luring rocks behind  
Where Tarshish ships, in days of yore,  
    Were broken by the Eastern Wind.

And hugged the coast of Atlas crowned,  
    Then, plunging, made the open main,  
Nor dared the moorman's seas that bound  
    The couchant lion of granite Spain.



Then Eastward Ho, for Ormuz gold !  
And Eastward Ho, for Cape and Bay !  
Though England's oaks are gnarled and old  
And England's noons are chill and grey.

The wisdom of the world is wise  
But weary with a weight of fears.  
With us the course compelling lies  
'Tis ours to shape th' unfolding years.

They met the Dutchman bellying past  
Where crested combers overwhelm,  
Full hard against th' opposing blast  
And Vanderdecken at the helm.

And, hunger bitter, sought and sailed  
Where thiek clouds bind the sullen wave,  
Where moves Behemoth cedar tailed,  
With eyes like morning's eye-lids brave.

Out of his mouth go lamps a-burn,  
And all the flakes of all his flesh  
Wear crimson when the levins turn  
The winedark flood to light afresh.

By amber planets, wan with rain,  
Stiff moons that tease the troubled soul,  
Whose meerschauimed seas slide sheer amain,  
Unending to the southern pole.

Then by the Bay where pirates thrive —  
The pirates who the galleons find —  
And ill-sagged gusts gales contrive  
A cauldron of the vexing wind.

The rest is told for those who seek,  
The rest is writ for all may see  
How Charnock, like the well greaved Greek,  
Held for the West the East in fee.

He halted, where the myna wings,  
And laid the walls of William's day  
And all the keels of all the Kings  
Come riding up the waterway.

Wide Asia's Queen, of sure emprise,  
The city million-loomed to bless,  
The city of the flaming skies,  
The city of the world's caress.

Of fighting Holwell undismayed,  
Of Hastings of the wondrous brow,  
Of Plassey of the leaping blade,  
Of keening kite and scarlet bough.

And here he sleeps, and by his side,  
Sole sharer of death's kindly gloom,  
The sapphire girdled dark eye'd bride  
He wrested from the sandal fume.

White Wielder of the Law unbought,  
High Wardress of the East's desire,  
The city of the scatheless court,  
The city of the pointing spire.

(Dak, *The Empire*, 24th August 1908)

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## THE CITY'S BIRTHDAY

*"On Saturday, August 24th, 1690, was made the 'Mid-day Halt' of Charnock" — (Firminger's **Guide to Calcutta**)*

1.     He looked along the level flood  
          A-toss to swell the Bay,  
And knew the ample flow as good  
          For England's need that day :—  
No tyrant havoc'd northward far, —  
          To sun-rise desert wide, —  
To south the silt-piled shallow bar, —  
          In front the yellow tide.  
"A halt, a halt !" cried Charnock bold—  
          "The noon is all aflame," —  
"Fling forth the Flag of England old"  
          "In royal William's name !"
2.     The Sabbath noon burned full to light  
          The silken folds that flew  
To warn a world of England's might  
          And heart the land anew.  
From fested haunt and godded fane  
          The brown folk eager pressed  
To scan the leaguers from the main —  
          The users from the West  
"A halt, a halt — the noon is gay," —  
          "Where rides the stream at-best !" —  
Cried Charnock of the jerkin grey —  
          "To Mary leave the rest !"
3.     The halt well made, the guide rope sped  
          To loose the Flag to breeze,  
And those there were who bowed the head  
          And those who bent the knees,—

When out upon the Sabbath air  
 The cry rose full and free  
 To Him the help in times that were  
 The hope for years to be.  
 While clear along a palm-set line  
 To Suttanatti's strand  
 Droned the gold gong of Kali's shrine  
 To hark the heedless land.

- 4     The grudging dusk hid palm and shrine  
       In night's bewildered fold,  
 Where still the stars illumed the sign  
       Of England's sway unrolled.  
 Ranged fringing lights in amber fret  
       Merged loud *bazar* and *hat*  
 With minaret and parapet  
       And mugger guarded *ghat*.  
 And some were 'tent to seek and slay,  
       And some were fain to spare :—  
 "Good lack !" quoth Charnock where he lay —  
       "How tongues be wagging here !"

5.    Forgot Hijili's island hell,  
       'Lubarias' fevered round,  
 The hide girt trader wrought him well  
       To lay the city bound.  
 The sword smites clean in England's cause,  
       The trowel for England rings  
 As true a note for Church and Laws  
       As blade for warrior Kings.

“A sword, a sword, an fate may will”  
 “For my good merchant-men !”  
 Cried Charnock of the wayward quill —  
 “— A sword, a spade, a pen !”

6.     Now all the craft of all the coasts  
           Come bellowing up the Bay,  
       And every pursed armada boasts  
           Its traffickers to-day.  
       Where Danes and Dutch and Frank bid high  
           To woo the land at ease  
       The Wonder-flag patrols the sky  
           And Sentinels the seas,  
       “A halt, a halt,” sang Charnock bold  
           “Pack bale and speed the wain !”  
       And Kali’s burnished gong of gold  
           Droned to the traders’ strain.
  
7.     Stout Charnock sleeps in Johnian shade  
           Beside his gem-decked bride,  
       And William’s walls the users laid  
           Are towered along the tide.  
       But still the Wonder-banner spread  
           From Wellesley’s masted pile  
       Recalls our tale of gallant dead —  
           Sons of a wind-swept isle,—  
       Great hearted ones of England’s breed  
           They held the East in fee  
       Through Him our help in hour of need  
           Our hope for years to be.

(Dak, in the *Journal*, 29th August 1909)

# **JOB CHARNOCK' \***

*The Founder of Calcutta A.D. 1686 to A.D. 1692*

## **Part the First**

### **I**

Proud England may be of the venturous sons  
Her commerce sent forth in the olden day ;  
East, west, north, and south they explored at once,  
Not a sea, nor a river to ocean that runs  
Escaped their keen search, nor a harbour, nor bay.

### **II**

Where pours yellow Ganges her western stream  
To meet the black swell of blue ocean's tide,  
Stands Hoogly by Aurungzeeb Shah supreme,  
Fresh opened for commerce, and his Nazim<sup>2</sup>  
Rules master of all who for trade reside.

### **III**

The ships of the nations of Europe are there ;  
The Dutch, and the French, and the Portuguese,  
In commerce contending, contentedly bear  
The burthens this Nazim bids foreigners share,  
When mandates from Delhi demand rupees.

### **IV**

The English there likewise a factory rear ;  
The Puritan Ckarnock is placed at its head,  
His stern British spirit, a stranger to fear,  
Revolts at oppression, no wrong will he fear,  
'Tis a cause in hot youth he hath fought for and bled.

## V

A difference rises which rivals foment ;  
 The Nazim in anger resolves to expel  
 Presumptuous merchants, who dare to resent  
 His order to raise the tax cent. per cent.,  
 For the foreigners' license to buy and sell.

## VI

'Gainst the factory ranged is the force of the state ;  
 The French and the Dutch their artillery lend,  
 The English hold council : the odds are too great ;  
 'Tis resolved in the night to their ships to retreat ;  
 Embarking by stealth they the river descend.

## VII

Saith Charnock, "Shall we thus submit to be driven  
 "Like dogs from the seat of a prosperous trade  
 "By a Nazim insulted ? Forbid it, high heaven !  
 "Redress I will seek where redress may be given :  
 "Say, comrades, who of ye will follow my lead ?"

## VIII

Job Charnock hath landed in Balasore bay,  
 And with him a band of bold spirits are gone,  
 Not far off encamped a Mogul army lay,  
 War with Oorias waging, who owned not the sway  
 Of the great Aurungzeeb's son Shah Aazim-oo-shan.

## IX

In camp the young prince holds a royal court ;  
 There Charnock, a suppliant, stands in Durbar :  
 The army beleaguers a raja's fort,  
 A rebel, who made to the Shah bold retort  
 When summoned for dues of a Zemindar.

## X

Saith Charnock, "Dread prince, never wall like that  
 "Shall arrest the career of great Aurungzeeb's son ;  
 "Let a ram be made ready to shatter the gate,  
 "Or over, or through it we'll penetrate —  
 "And show thy brave troops, how a fort may be won".

## XI

"We deemed ye were traders, not men of sword ;  
 "Your courage we'll put to the proof very soon.  
 "If ye be not vain boasters, but men of your word,  
 "And win me the stronghold of this rebel lord,  
 "Ye may ask of my bounty a royal boon".

## XII

Job Charnock his brave band leads up to the walls :  
 They carry in slings a young tree fresh felled :  
 They rush at the gate—it is shattered and falls, —  
 Such daring unlooked for the rebel appals,  
 The gateway is won, and the garrison yield.

## XIII

"Shabash !" saith the prince, "ye are truly brave men ;  
 "Unfold now your purpose — what boon ye implore".  
 Job Charnock his tale tells of injuries then —  
 "Grant me never to deal with that Nazim again,  
 "Give a factory's site on the opposite shore".

## XIV

"Take three mouzas<sup>3</sup> free for this service in war :—  
 "But more we would grant thee for friendship's sake ;  
 "The lands there that stretch into Sundarbans far  
 "Want a master : take them, and be their zemindar ;  
 "And render us service when service we seek".



## XV

The bargain is settled, the Firman signed :

To the Great English Company trading with Hind,  
Four and twenty parganas of land are assigned,  
To be held of the Khalsa<sup>4</sup> on terms defined :

Now haste — take possession — the bargain to bind.

**Part the Second**

## I

Job Charnock stands thoughtful on Hooghly's shore :

In his hand is the grant of his wide domain :  
He hath surveyed, examined, and searched it o'er,  
'Tis populous, fertile, with ample store  
Of products for commerce, of cattle, and grain.

## II

A site he is seeking to build him a fort,  
Where the Company's factors securely may live,  
And hold with due *prestige* their zemindar's court,  
Dealing justice to all who for commerce resort,  
That a city may grow up about it and thrive.

## III

"Plant here England's standard where narrows the land ;  
"Our ships may their cargoes on this bank,  
"Close anchored in shore, and well under command ;  
"No army can pass round, nor pillaging band,  
"Yon jheel<sup>4</sup> stretching eastward so covers the flank.

## IV

"Here southward secure from oppression and spoil,  
"Our weavers may labour with spindle and loom,  
"And husbandmen crop the rich Sundarbun soil,  
"With only the tiger to fear in their toil :  
"Yes ! here let us raise up for commerce a home.

## V

“For this mighty river will freely bring down  
“The products of Hindoostan’s exquisite art ;  
“While eastward to Bakirgung, Dacca, Chatgaon,  
“Yon jheel yields a way — ’tis the spot for a town  
“By nature designed for a general mart ”.

## VI

He traces the lines for a rampart and gate,  
With five solid bastions flanking the wall ;  
“To my country’s King William I dedicate  
“This fort of her fortunes, — Go prosper its fate !  
“And make my fort William the pride of Bengal.”

## VII

All day ply the Beeldars<sup>b</sup> with pickaxe and spade,  
Overlooked by Job Charnock’s own watchful eye ;  
The day’s work is over, the men have been paid ;  
Deep darkness to twilight the evening shade,  
While Charnock sits watching the starlit sky.

## VIII

Now gong’s sudden roar, and a trumpet’s blast,  
Peals loud from an ancient temple near,  
Whence issues by torchlight a multitude vast ;  
They bear to the pile for its obsequies last  
A corpse richly garlanded laid on bier.

## IX

The pile is built high on the river side,  
And thitherward wends the procession strange :  
’Mid priests tossing flambeaux, whose glare spreads wide,  
A palanquin, bearing the widowed bride,  
Advances, and round it men cluster and range.

## X

Arrived at the pile, from the closed palanquin,  
 A damsel is lifted, with long flowing hair,  
 In beauty's form moulded, of years but fifteen ;  
 The priests gather round her ; by gesture and mien  
 They entreat, while they threaten, and point to the bier.

## XI

She yields not assent, yet is dragged to the pile ;  
 The corpse on the summit already is laid ;  
 They lift her : she struggles resisting, the while  
 Gongs loudly are beaten, and Brahmins with guile  
 Proclaim that the Suttee her death-vow hath made.

## XII

“Can I sit here and suffer this impious rite ?  
 “What ! ho there ! my guard ”, crieth Charnock, in ire :  
 “Tis murder they perpetrate here in my sight ;  
 “Away let us rescue that angel of light,  
 “Whom thus, unconsenting, they cast in the fire.”

## XIII

With a shout they have rushed, and have scattered the throng ;  
 He bears off the Suttee, all trembling with fear.  
 “Now tell me”, saith Charnock, “so fair and so young,  
 “Why doom they to torments ? Why burn thee along  
 “With the corpse they have laid upon yonder bier ? ”

## XIV

“Art thou, then, a stranger who knows not the faith  
 “That Brahmins of Hindoostan cruelly teach ?  
 “All here worship Kali, grim goddess of death,  
 “My birthplace, Calcutta, her dread name it hath ;  
 “My parents are Brahmins, her glory who preach.

## XV

‘Bethrothed in my childhood to one of my kin,  
Who died while the marriage was yet incomplete,  
“They told me that life for a widow was sin :  
“That to burn with his corpse was the sure way to win  
“Joy eternal in heaven, where him I should meet.

## XVI

“My heart felt no longing that husband to join,  
“While reason condemned the unmerciful creed,  
“But his kin for lucre, from pride of caste mine,  
“United in urging our life to resign,  
“And so was my doom as a Suttee decreed.

## XVII

“Thou hast given me life, but a terrible fate,  
“By kindred disowned, dishonoured outcast,  
“More cruel than twenty deaths me doth await ;  
“Wherever I turn men will view me with hate,  
“And leave me unpitied to perish at last”.

## XVIII

“Nay ! fair and lovely one ! never believe  
“We have saved thee from flames, and have given thee life,  
“A victim to worse persecution to leave ;  
“Abjure faith in Kali, — our gospel receive ;  
“Before these I vow them to take thee to wife.”

## XIX

With rites of the church he hath plighted his hand  
To that virgin widow, thus saved from the pile ;  
In true wedded bliss in Bhooanee’s own land,  
Long lived in high honour, and Chief in command,  
Calcutta’s brave founder, a willing exile.

## XX

She died, and her spirit appeared in a dream,  
 While Charnock's eye fresh poured the scalding tear ;  
 His race from a terrible Curse to redeem,  
 Before Kali's image to vow she did seem.  
 That a fowl should be slain o'er her grave each year.

## XXI

No light thing the pious Job Charnock deems  
 A warning by spirit unearthly given :  
 He believeth in Christ, and he believeth in dreams,  
 And yearly the vow of his loved one redeems,  
 On the day that her spirit departed to heaven.

## XXII

And therefore Bhooanee<sup>6</sup> hath smiled on the mart  
 By the bold stranger raised with her temple in sight —  
 So chronicle Brahmins, forgiving the part,  
 That won for Job Charnock the bride of heart,  
 Defeating their purpose, profaning their rite.

## XXIII

A century passeth, — Calcutta hath grown  
 To be the first city wide Bengal ;  
 Half a century more, and see Delhi's high throne  
 Transferred to Calcutta, who claims for her own  
 More than Aurgungzeeb's Empire, Sindh, Punjab, and all.

## XXIV

Go ye, who inherit this heritage wide,  
 By deeds of two centuries bravely won,  
 Go seek the old record how Job Charnock died,  
 Seek the grave where he lies with his wife side by side,  
 'Tis in the Churchyard round the Church of St. John.

## XXV

A tomb in the corner, with octagon dome,  
 Hath of marble a slab in the wall deep imbedded,  
 Which tells how in hope of redemption to come,  
 Two pilgrims of this world found here their last home,  
 Calcutta's brave founder — the Sutte he wedded<sup>1</sup>.

1 From "Specimens of Ballad poetry, applied to the Tales and Traditions of the East" 1862, by H.T. Prinsep.

The poem has been reproduced in the BENGAL PAST & PRESENT, Vol. III, January-April, 1909, pp 401-409. The Secretary of the Calcutta Historical Society appended the following note in reproducing this poem in the journal: "Mr. C.E. Buckland has been so kind as to send the following set of verses on the Founder of Calcutta which, if their poetic merit is not very great, will be of interest if only on account of their author, a son of John Prinsep (1746-1830), a brother of James Prinsep, commemorated by the famous *ghat*, and the father of Sir Henry Thoby Prinsep of legal fame. The copy of the booklet from which these verses are extracted was presented to Mr. Buckland's grandfather by the author. A map of the country round about Calcutta accompanied the original. The description of Charnock as a puritan is pure poetic license, and so of course is the story of Charnock's marriage as told here.....For the story of Charnock's marriage see BENGAL PAST & PRESENT, Vol I, P. 200".

2. Nazim is a high officer, generally governing not less than a province. The quarrel of Job Charnock with the Governor of Hooghly and his consequent expulsion is historical. By

establishing his factory at Calcutta, on the east bank of the river, he came under the Nazim of Moorshedabad.

3. Mouza, a village : the three villages granted were Sootanutee, Calcutta, & Govindapoor.

4. Khalsa — The State Exchequer of Delhi sovereigns was so called.

4a) Jheel — a stagnant pool, or marshy lake. The Salt-Lake, as it is called by Europeans— Dhappa Manpoor is the Bengali name — lies within two miles east of Calcutta.

5. Beeldars — labourers employed in earth works.

6. Kali, Bhooanee — names of the destroying goddess (an incarnation of Shiva, the destroyer), especially worshipped in Calcutta; the name of which in Bengali, is Kali—kota, the house, or fort, of Kali. The ruins still exist of a great place of her worship, on the Chitpoor Road, which was defiled by Suraj-ud-doula, when he took Calcutta in A.D. 1756, and has since been left to decay.

7. Hamilton tells us that Job Charnock rescued a Hindoo girl from Suttee by his guards, and married her. His eldest daughter by her married Charles Eyre, who was Chief agent of the East India Company in Bengal in 1694. The same author mentions the erection of the mausoleum still standing in St. John's Churchyard over the wife; and Charnock's superstitious practice of sacrificing a cock in it on the anniversary of her death. In the tomb there is the following inscription — “D.O.M. Jobus Charnock, armiger Anglicanus, et nup. in hoc regno Bengalensi dignissimus Anglorum Agens, mortalitatis suae

exuvias sub hoc marmore deposuit, ut, in spe beatæ resurrectionis, ad Christi Judicis adventum obdormirent 10th Januarii A.D. 1692". The inscription passes over the wife in silence, though the mausoleum, which is large and in the Oriental style of architecture, was erected over her before Charnock's death. Underneath is a separate inscription in Latin :— 'Partier, jacet, Maria Jobi primogenita Caroli Eyre, Anglorum hicci præfecti, conjux charissima, quæ obiit 19 die Februarii, A.D. 1696-97". (It is, however, most unlikely that the mausoleum was erected before Charnock's death. The inscription has been contracted by Prinsep). There is also in the same mausoleum a separate tablet for Hamilton, who obtained some advantages for the English by curing Ferokhseer Shah of a troublesome disease.





## **JOB CHARNOCK'S WIFE \***

### **Part I**

Job Charnock, the fourth officer of the Kasimbazar factory of East India Company, was drinking punch at an inn called 'Old England'.

Mary Ann, a 10-year-old Anglo-Indian girl, was serving the drink.

Charnock had recently come to India under a five-year agreement with the East India Company at a salary of £ 20 per annum. Being a newcomer to this country, he was naturally feeling very lonely.

Suddenly somebody slapped on his shoulder from behind. John Elliot, a factor, who is also the proprietor of this inn at Kasimbazar, presented himself before Charnock.

"Getting home-sick, Mr. Charnock? Take more drinks and all your worries for home will be swept away", he said, and asked Mary Ann to fetch more drinks.

Mary Ann arrived with a big jar of drinks.

"How do you like this slave girl of mine, Mr. Charnock?", Elliot asked.

"Slave girl ?", Charnock was surprised. "But she is only a child".

"Wait for two or three years and you will see this child will grow into a seductive belle, attracting customers to my inn. Do you know Mr. Charnock that these native girls attain puberty at a very tender age?", Elliot said.

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\* Free translation of portions of Dr. Pratap Chandra Chunder's 'JOB CHARNOCKER BIBI' (*Bengali*) by B.B. Bhaduri.

"I am not a native. My mother was a blackie, but my father was an Englishman. I am English", Mary Ann protested loudly.

Charnock felt a curious compassion for this child. "By jove, certainly you are English", he asserted.

Mary Ann's eyes brightened with gratitude. Suddenly she embraced Charnock and kissed him. "You are very good. I love you"

Elliot laughed whole-heartedly, enjoying the scene very much, and departed.

\* \* \*

Kasimbazar was then a very small village situated near Maxudabad on the coast of the Hooghly river. Foreign merchants, including English, Dutch and French were then having a flourishing trade in silk at this place.

Unlike his subordinates such as apprentice officers, writers, factors, merchants and senior merchants of the East India Company, Charnock was very honest. He would not do anything that would go against the interests of the Company. He came to know that many of his subordinates had made some fortune by entering into private business with the local people. Charnock detested this from the core of his heart.

All on a sudden, Charnock's routine, monotonous life at Kasimbazar came to an end.

Worshipful Mr. Chamberlain, Chief of Patna factory, took Charnock to Patna to work there under him. Patna was then a big store-yard for saltpetre, which is used in the manufacture of ammunition. Since Europe was then being riddled

with wars off and on, there was a growing demand for saltpetre. The East India Company had a busy time shipping saltpetre, as much quantity as possible, at frequent intervals at the directives of the Company's London Office.

Charnock was asked by Fort St. George, Madras, to acquire all details in respect of saltpetre.

Before leaving for Patna, Charnock got his long hair cut to the usual length to give a masculine touch to his effeminate appearance.

\* \* \*

This was a welcome change for Charnock. He at once got himself engaged deeply to learn the different qualities of saltpetre, the pattern of trade, local people etc.

At that time, Moghul Emperor Shahjahan had become ill. The fatal fraternal struggle for the throne of Delhi had started. Sultan Shuja, the second son of Shahjahan, proclaimed himself Emperor at Rajmahal, near Patna. He rushed towards Agra with his force only to be defeated at Allahabad by the gigantic army of Aurangzeb and thereafter he retreated to Bengal. Aurangzeb then occupied the throne of Delhi and held his old father captive at Agra.

Sultan Shuja, however, had done a great favour to the East Indian Company while Shahjahan was the Emperor. He persuaded Shahjahan to grant unrestricted trading rights in India to the Company for a nominal tax of Rs. 3,000 per year.

\* \* \*

At that time, there was great scarcity of houses at Patna. The British could not build any factory in the city itself. They had established their base at Singhia, 15 miles north of Patna.

Seth Sewcharan, a trader in textiles who had business relations with the Company, one day came to Charnock with a proposal. He asked for some loan from the Company and offered Charnock a commission. After a great deal of persuasion, Charnock agreed and got the loan sanctioned by the Company. In lieu, he got commission. But for two nights he could not get a wink of sleep.

Unable to bear the pricking of conscience, he went to the Chief of the Factory and surrendered the commission to him.

“What is this ?” the Chief asked surprisingly.

“I am feeling terribly guilty”, Charnock replied. “I have accepted commission from Sewcharan for securing him the loan. This commission is due to the Company”.

The Chief was greatly impressed by his honesty.

“Well, Job, I do appreciate that it is difficult for you to manage with a meagre remuneration of £ 20 per annum. Why don’t you start some business of your own in such lines in which the Company has no interests ?”

The Chief introduced him to Janab Mohiuddin and even provided him with some initial capital to start with. Thus began Charnock’s private business and after some time, profits began to flow into his pockets.

\* \* \*

One day Sewcharan invited Charnock to participate in the local Holi festival. Charnock gladly agreed and dressed like an Indian, got himself mixed with the revelling crowd. There was no barrier between men and women at the height of their exuberance.

A dusky complexioned woman with great physical attraction came to Charnock and pasted **abir** on his forehead. Charnock, too, reciprocated and applied **abir** on her cheeks and bosom.

\* \* \*

Suddenly the Nawab's force comprising infantrymen and cavalry appeared on the scene. There were even two elephants on which were mounted soldiers armed with guns.

Emperor Aurangzeb would not tolerate such merry-making in a Hindu festival. They ordered the crowd to disperse immediately.

Motia loudly protested and wanted to know whether the Emperor had issued any proclamation in this connection. Enraged at this, the soldiers drove the elephants towards the crowd. Except Motia, all the people ran away in terror. Motia alone stood firm like an impersonation of protest.

An elephant went very near her and she would have been trampled had Charnock not hurried to her and pulled her out to a nearby lane.

"Who is this girl?", Charnock asked Sewcharan.

"She is Motia, a girl of low caste. She was stolen from her parents' house by goondas and brought to the brothels of Patna.

A few days later, Charnock heard that Aurangzeb had issued a new order, banning prostitution in Patna. He felt greatly amused.

One day he met Motia at the riverside. "Have you heard the Emperor's new order?", She asked. "Where shall we go now? As you have saved me from death the other day, you are to give me shelter. I will serve you for ever like a slave".

Charnock felt embarrassed at this novel proposal. But he realised her helplessness and felt pity for her.

Through the help of one of his faithful orderlies, Charnock rented a **kutchra** house on the bank of the Ganges and kept her there. He had, however, not the slightest intention of keeping her as his mistress.

But after a few days, he came to realise that Motia had developed a great weakness for him. One evening, while Charnock came to her on a routine visit, she opened her heart to him. At first Charnock argued with his own conscience but finally surrendered to her irresistible love. He accepted her as his concubine.

\* \* \*

Meanwhile, British trading in India became more and more difficult, day by day. Their ships laden with merchandise were frequently seized by Moghul officers and these had to be released after paying a heavy ransom. Taking advantage of the uncertain political situation, dacoits had intensified their activities on the river.

Charnock's tenure of service was coming to an end. The Chief, too, was due to retire shortly and expressed his desire to go back to his homeland. He had strongly recommended to the directors Charnock as his successor. At first, Charnock declined to continue his service in India after the expiry of the agreement but later on, he changed his mind and himself wrote to the directors that he would remain in Patna if he were appointed Chief of that factory.

The reply came one day from the Court of Directors, appointing him the Chief of Patna factory. But his salary remained the same, i.e., £ 20 per year.

\* \* \*

## Part II

The new Chief of Patna factory Worshipful Job Charnock was tender in age but mature in experience. Besides being an authority on saltpetre, he had acquired a fair proficiency in the local language and became familiar with Indian customs.

Meanwhile, Sultan Shuja died at Dacca. The **firman** granted by Shahjahan became thus useless. Charnock was trying his best to secure a new firman from Aurangzeb.

His untiring efforts to promote the business of the Company had begun paying dividends. The Court of Directors now pinned much hopes on him. His leisure hours became delightful in the company of Motia.

But within two years, a great crisis developed in the Company's trading in saltpetre. A new Nawab, Ibrahim Khan, came to Patna. He was hopelessly inefficient in administration. His subordinates were quick to take advantage of his worthlessness and bribing became the order of the day. Various representations by Charnock to the Delhi Durbar to stop this practice were futile.

Over and above this, the discriminating Jakat tax was reimposed on the Hindus. This hit the Hindu traders very badly and as a consequence, the Company's business was adversely affected since most of its trade relations were with the Hindus. The Company's trade at Patna was on the verge of collapse.

Undaunted Charnock, however, held the steering of the Company with unlimited patience and perseverance.



The directors were very pleased with his work and as a token of their appreciation increased his salary by a further £ 20 a year.

\* \* \*

A directive came from London to the effect that Charnock should proceed to Delhi as a messenger of the Company and submit an application to the Emperor for a new **firman** to stop the atrocities of the Moghul officers.

Charnock prepared himself for his Delhi mission. He called for the tailor to give measurement for his new dress. He wanted to be dressed like an Englishman.

Meanwhile, an extraordinary incident took place, which not only upset his whole programme but changed the course of his future life.

A new English youngman, Joseph Townshend, came to Patna as an apprentice to work in the Company's navy on the river. One afternoon he came running to Charnock with the news that a native young lady was going to commit **Sati** on the other bank of the Ganges. She would burn herself alive on the funeral pyre along with her dead husband. Townshend wanted to know if Charnock was interested to witness the **Sati**.

Charnock readily agreed. Equipped with pistols and guns, they left for the place with some armed guards.

The funeral pyre was burning furiously. Before the pyre stood the Hindu widow surrounded by her relatives and priests. She was a woman of incomparable beauty. She wore the Hindu marriage dress, deep red Varanasi **sari** with matching supplementary garments and costly gold ornaments lending an additional charm to her beauty.

Her tall graceful figure, exceedingly fair complexion which bore a crimson tint with the glow of the fire, sharp nose, bow-shaped eye-brows and her exquisitely lovely face infatuated Charnock beyond description.

The woman was standing still before the pyre with her eyelids closed as if in deep meditation. The chanting of **mantras** by the priests ceased, indicating that the time had now come for the widow to leap into the pyre.

Charnock felt terribly aggrieved for this woman who was going to sacrifice her life into the fire. His heart became filled with an irresistible desire for this woman. He felt a strong urge within himself to possess her, absolutely as his own.

“Joe, this tall, fair complexioned woman, will be my wife”, Charnock’s pistol roared. “Attack those Brahmins”, he ordered.

Townshend fired his gun. There was great confusion in the burning **ghat** at this sudden attack. People ran helter-skelter in search of safety.

With lightning speed, Charnock dashed towards the widow who seemed to be in a semi-conscious state, and lifting her up in his strong arms, hurried for the boat. Meanwhile, Joe also arrived and the boat sailed towards the Patna factory under cover of the night.

The woman lay fainted on Charnock’s lap.

\* \* \*

Next morning, Alimuddin, the Vakil of the Company, sounded a note of caution to Charnock. It was a great offence to abduct a Hindu widow who was going to commit **Sati**. Charnock paid no heed to his warning.

The widow who was lying in the bedroom of Charnock, had not yet regained her conscience. Motia was nursing her. Charnock was making anxious enquiries at frequent intervals from an adjacent room.

Vakil Alimuddin again came to Charnock. He had heard the whole incident from Townshend. The opinions of the officers of the factory were divided on this issue. One group supported Charnock's action. The Chief had done a noble deed, they said. He had rescued a beautiful life from the horrible practice of the Hindus, a glaring example of chivalry. The other group criticised Charnock's action. The relation with the Nawab's Government had been strained. If, at this time, the Hindus went against the Company, the business would come to a standstill, they opined.

Motia informed Charnock that the widow had regained consciousness. Charnock entered the room alone with a trembling heart.

On the cot was seated the lady like the Beauty Queen. Her fair complexion seemed to be glittering with the light of the candle.

"Why did you save me", asked she.

"Because I won't allow that exquisite beauty of yours to burn into ashes", Charnock replied.

"You want to get me by force? I know it is for sheer greed for my beauty. But I can burn this beauty with the flame of this candle". She took the candle near her face. Charnock swiftly snatched away the candle from her hand.

“I know you don’t attach any value to your youth and beauty”, Charnock said with emotion. “But I will not apply any force on you. I had to abduct you because there was no other way to rescue you. Now you are free. You can go anywhere you like but before that give me your word that you will not destroy this beauty in fire”.

“Where shall I go”, the lady said in despair. “I have been abducted by foreigners I have no place in my society. Except in the fire, there is no shelter for me anywhere”.

“No, no, then you stay here. You won’t have any cause for inconvenience. Motia will take care of you”, Charnock hastily replied.

Vakil Alimuddin’s excited voice was heard from the adjacent room. “Mr. Charnock, just now I have received very alarming news. The Brahmins have complained to the Kazi against you. They have charged you with abduction of a lady. The Kotwal may come here any moment with his force to arrest you.”

“I am not allowing myself to be caught so easily”, Charnock said. “We will run away in a boat. They won’t be able to trace us in the darkness of night.”

With these words, he lifted the lady from the bed and carried her in his arms, heading for the boat anchored in the river **ghat**. The lady did not offer any resistance.

The wise Vakil had arranged everything inside the boat. There were sufficient foodstuff, dresses both for Charnock and the lady, guns and ammunition and even a small tent. He advised Charnock to hide in the forest near Lalbagh on the

coast of the Ganges. He would communicate with Charnock there by sending his trusted people. When the danger at Patna was over, Charnock could return with the lady.

On a dark night, the boat arrived at the desired spot. "Come on — what's your name? All right, I will call you by the name of Angela". Charnock helped her to get down on the shore. He fixed the tent in the darkness and placing the leaves on the ground arranged a bed inside the tent. At his request, Angela stretched herself on the bed of leaves and Charnock lay outside under a tree with his gun.

Day after day and night after night went by like this, but they remained so near yet but far from each other.

Meanwhile, Vakil Alimuddin's trusted man had brought a message. There had been frightening developments at the Patna factory. The Nawab's force had surrounded the factory but when they discovered that the bird had flown, they arrested Vakil Alimuddin and took him to the prison. The force had now proceeded towards the Singhia factory. Anyway, Charnock was advised to be very careful about his movements. The man had also brought with him more foodstuff, utensils and beds for both Charnock and the lady.

"Why do you call me Angela?", she asked one day.

"Haven't I got my own name?"

"What is your name?"

"Let me forget my past name. You will call me Angela", she said.

"Angela, Angela, Angela!"

"What is your mother tongue?", she asked.

“English”.

“Will you teach me your language? I want to speak to you in your language.”

“Very well, very well, I will teach you my language most gladly. Say . . . I love you”.

“What does it mean? ”.

Charnock explained the meaning in the local language.

“You are very greedy. Do you expect to get my love so soon? It is not so easy to get the love of a woman”.

“I am a Hindu widow; what is the value of my love? ”

“That is why it is priceless. I am not a Hindu. I am a Christian. I don’t agree that you should remain widow forever”.

“Your religion is not my religion. A Brahmin widow never marries again, but sacrifices herself into fire”.

“I am not prepared to recognise that cruel religion as a religion”.

“Do you want me to forsake my religion? ”

“I won’t apply any force on you. Do whatever you like”.

Angela became silent. Deep thoughts seemed to engulf her.

\* \* \*

Alimuddin’s man again brought some message. There had been no appreciable change in the situation. The Kotwal’s force still surrounded the Patna factory. The Vakil was in the prison. But negotiations were going on with the Brahmins for a settlement.

On the other front, a directive had come from Hooghly asking Charnock to expedite his Delhi mission. The Second Officer wanted to know what arrangement Charnock was making for the purpose. Charnock replied that he had to cancel his journey as he was physically indisposed. The Company could better appoint some Vakil in Delhi instead.

The man left some fresh vegetables and other foodstuff for Charnock. But who is going to cook ?

Angela voluntarily undertook this job. Her cooked food seemed very relishing to Charnock.

“You foreigner, are you mad?”, Angela said. “The Nawab’s force is after you. If they get you, they will either trample you under an elephant’s feet or cut your body into pieces with a sword. Haven’t you got any fear for your life ?”

“I can ask you the same thing, Angela. Why did you want to sacrifice your life into the fire ?”

“To reach the kingdom of **Sati**, the eternal heaven. But what do you want to achieve by inviting this fatal danger ?”

“I wanted to achieve my heaven in this life and not after death”.

That night Charnock was lying as usual under the tree with the gun in his hands when he heard the sound of some light footsteps and turning his head saw the figure of Angela approaching towards him.

Charnock got up and sat. “Come Angela. Have you not gone to bed yet ?”

“Couldn’t get sleep ; that is why I have come”.

"Take your seat".

"How long will you take these troubles for me ?", she asked.

"These are no troubles for me. I am happy, I have got you near me, I am hearing your sweet voice, seeing your beautiful face always."

"Get up".

"Where ?"

"Inside the tent".

"Is there any place for me there ?"

"Yes, there is a place for you. Don't you know? Can't you understand? I love you, I love you".

\* \* \*

The next morning after taking her dip in the river, Angela stood before Charnock.

"Where are your ornaments ?", Charnock asked surprisingly.

"I have thrown all my ornaments and my marriage dress into the river. Let my old memories be washed away with them", she said.

Angela had prepared two garlands made up of wild flowers, one of which she handed over to Charnock.

"Come, let us exchange these garlands. This will be our marriage — in the Gandharva style". After exchanging the garlands, she bowed before Charnock, by stretching herself on the ground. "You are my husband", she said.

Charnock took her to his bosom. "You are my religious wife".



“The witnesses to our marriage are the sun, river, and this earth,” Angela said.

“The witness to our marriage is our love”, Charnock said.

\* \* \*

One morning the sweet music of **shehnai** was heard from a distance. A big houseboat, decorated with flowers and flags was approaching the shore. The music was being played from this boat. On the roof of the boat was seen Joseph Townshend, Vakil Alimuddin and Motia.

“Everything is all right, Saheb, everything is all right”, the Vakil shouted from the boat.

Charnock came to know that everything had been amicably settled by paying Rs. 3,000 in cash, some textile clothing and sword blades. The Kotwal's force had been withdrawn from the factory. There was, therefore, no barrier for Charnock and his newly-wed wife in returning to Patna.

After arriving back at Patna, Charnock wanted to establish his wife in society by arranging a sumptuous feast. He rented a new big house at Patna to celebrate his marriage ceremony. There had been separate arrangements for Hindus, Muslims and Christians to take their meals at respective intervals. But surprisingly enough, excepting the Muslims, no noteworthy people either from the Hindus or Christians participated in the feast. The Hindus and the Christians had evidently not acknowledged the marriage of Charnock with a Hindu widow.

In due course, Angela gave birth to a daughter. Charnock christened her as Mary.

\* \* \*

One day, Charnock had a fearful row with Allen Catchpole, one of his subordinates. Charnock charged him with dishonesty but obstinate Catchpole counter-charged him with some other matters.

Charnock was enraged. "I will give my explanation to my superiors and not to you".

"I will see that you do that soon", Catchpole said. "The Agent of Hooghly Mr. Vincent, has been informed in the meanwhile".

"I care a fig for him", Charnock said. "I am serving the Company for over 20 years faithfully. The Company has always appreciated me as a good old servant".

"That is why the Directors have confined you to the Patna factory for 20 years", Catchpole ridiculed.

Charnock was furious and asked for his hunter, but meanwhile the second officer intervened and pushed Catchpole out of the room.

Catchpole, however, had hit Charnock at his heart. He felt that the Company had done nothing special for him in appreciation of his long service, excepting granting two increments during this long period.

He recalled with some grief that though Mathias Vincent had come to India five years after him, he had been made the Agent of Hooghly and Chief of the Bay of Bengal within this short period.

One day Charnock received a letter from Madras. The Court of Directors had appointed him the Chief of Kasimbazar

factory. Of course, his place was next to Vincent, but Charnock was assured of the post of the Chief of the Bay of Bengal after Vincent's retirement.

\* \* \*

Angela became conceived again, Mary had completed two years.

Charnock was now confronted with two problem — Angela's sickness and shipment of saltpetre.

Aurangzeb had recently imposed Jizia on the Hindus. As a protest, the Hindus were organising meetings every day, leaving aside all their work. The result was that thousands of empty bags had accumulated in the godowns.

Meanwhile, a directive came from Madras, asking Charnock to proceed to Kasimbazar immediately. Charnock, in his reply regretted his inability to leave Patna unless the shipments of saltpetre were completed.

A strong letter came from Madras, directing him to join the Kasimbazar factory forthwith, otherwise he would be dismissed from the service.

But Charnock was firm in his determination. This time he ignored the Madras authorities and wrote direct to London intimating the position of saltpetre shipments. The Company supported Charnock's decision and he continued to remain in Patna.

Slowly and slowly the saltpetre bags were filled and loaded onto the boats. Angela gave birth to her second daughter after struggling between life and death. She was named Elizabeth, after the celebrated Queen of England.

Charnock now sailed for Kasimbazar after spending 22 years in Patna, but he was no longer alone today. With him was his flourishing family consisting of his wife, his mistress and two daughters.

\* \* \*

### Part III

The Kasimbazar factory of the East India Company had undergone many changes during the past two decades. The British had demolished the thatched mud-huts and erected brick-built houses in their place.

Charnock's bungalow consisted of six spacious rooms, verandahs and a small garden. Mrs Charnock and Motia seemed to like very much the Chief's new bungatow.

Charnock, too, felt very delighted at his promotion.

James Hardinge, who was dismissed from the Company's service by Matthias Vincent, one day came to the Chief's bungalow with a basket of presents.

He regretfully complained to Charnock that Vincent had made a conspiracy to expel him from the factory and he was now living in John Elliott's inn. He was maintaining himself with some difficulty, by doing some small business and requested Charnock to do something.

Mrs. Charnock also pleaded for him and asked Charnock to allow Hardinge to take his food at the Company's table. Charnock did not commit anything and said that he would look into the matter.

Meanwhile, Governor Streynsham Master, an old enemy of Charnock was made to retire and the news was received by Charnock with great jubilation. It was now Vincent's turn, Charnock said to himself.

\* \* \*

At last, Emperor Aurangzeb's **firman** was obtained. A facsimile copy of the **firman** was received by Charnock in the urgent mail. The **firman** granted trading rights to the Company on payment of  $3\frac{1}{2}\%$  tax at Surat port only. In other places, they were exempted from paying any tax at all.

The victory was celebrated at the factories of Hooghly and Kasimbazar with great enthusiasm marked by processions, music, dance, drinking, feasts and firing of guns.

But Charnock's complacency was very short-lived. Rai Balchandra, popularly known as Bulchand in British circles, was an employee of the Nawab, his duty being to collect taxes. He was a very shrewd man and was in the habit of accepting bribes freely.

At first Bulchand was not inclined to believe the bonafides of the **firman** and after some heated arguments with Charnock frankly asked for some gratification. Otherwise, he would not allow the boats laden with silk to leave Kasimbazar.

Charnock had to submit with a bitter feeling.

As soon as he returned to his bungalow, he was confronted with Motia's angry face. Mrs. Charnock and Motia had gone to the local Siva temple to offer **pujas**, but Bulchand's people had opposed the entry of a foreigner's wife and his mistress into the temple and also abused them. Motia, however, had forced her way into the temple taking Mrs. Charnock with her and both of them had offered **pujas**.

Charnock became furious when he heard this event, but it was beyond his capacity to punish Bulchand. Feeling helpless, he asked Motia to go to the temple again.

In the evening, Charnock suddenly remembered "Old England", that inn of Elliot and left alone for that place. His unexpected visit created a stir inside the inn. Elliot was absent but James Hardinge was there.

A woman with great sex-appeal was singing. but as soon as she saw Charnock, she stopped singing and came to him. "I am Mary Ann", she said, setting Charnock to harp on his old memories.

"You have grown up so much ?", Charnock asked.

"You are my first lover", she reminded him.

Charnock felt greatly amused. "I have not forgotten that yet. But why did you stop singing ? Go on".

He saw many new British faces in the inn. Hardinge introduced him to one Naylor, who had come as an apprentice in the silk factory.

"I want to mix with you all", Charnock said. "May be I am the Chief but I am also a human being. I am very delighted when I see my own countrymen".

"The previous Chief would not recognise us as human beings", Naylor said.

Charnock had a pleasant evening that day in the inn.

While he was trekking back to his bungalow, he met Mary Ann on the way. She requested him to purchase her from John Elliot and keep her as his mistress. Charnock declined to do this, and told her that he was married and loved his wife very dearly.

Mary Ann implored him at least to spend one night with her and pulled his hand but Charnock pushed her aside and ordered her to go home. Mary Ann was enraged like a trampled serpent. "I will shoot your wife and take you away from her clutches", she said, burning with indignation.

\* \* \*

The Emperor's **firman** became useless. Nawab Shayista Khan made a totally different interpretation of the **firman**. All the English merchants should pay 3.5% tax in Bengal, he declared.

Bulchand called on Charnock and boastly announced the Nawab's order to him. Heated arguments ensued during the course of which Bulchand used some discourteous language towards Mrs. Charnock and Motia.

"Rai Bulchand, you should be ashamed of yourself", Charnock said. "Being a Hindu, you are serving a Moghul Emperor, who has destroyed the Viswanath temple at Varanasi and Keshabrai's temple at Mathura. You have not the guts to protest against these acts, and for sheer greed of wealth you have become the Emperor's servant, bringing disaster to your community and religion"

Finding no suitable reply, Bulchand asked him, in an appeasing manner, to forgive and forget the incident that took place the other day at the local temple. "I will go in person to your wife and ask her apology on behalf of my staff. I have heard that your Brahmin wife is very beautiful. I will feel myself gratified to have a sight of this beauty".

"My wife will not appear before you", Charnock retorted.

"Bulchand knows many ways how to bring others' wives out of their homes".

“Job Charnock is equally fit to protect his wife’s honour”.

“Let us stop these irrelevant talks. If the government tax is not received within seven days, all your boats laden with salt-petre and silk will be confiscated”.

“You will get all the money within seven days, but along with our protest note”.

\* \* \*

Job Charnock was proceeding very cautiously in his new assignment. On one side, there was bitter groupism among the Company’s employees, while on the other there was the shameless exploitation by the Nawab’s officials. Over and above these, he had his personal worries over his family and his private business.

Sundar Kahar, Motia’s brother, whom Charnock had employed in Patna to collect the dues pertaining to his own business, came to Kasimbazar one day after finishing his assignment. He handed over to Charnock a substantial amount, which the Englishman reinvested in various tradings at Maxudabad. He appointed James Hardinge to look after his business. Hardinge was now taking his meals at the Company’s table regularly. This was against the rule of the Company, but Charnock seemed to overlook this.

Mary was now a lively child. She could speak in English, Persian, Hindi and Bengali. Elizabeth had just learnt to walk.

Vincent was asked by the Directors to ship some shellac to London, but in spite of his best efforts, he failed to procure the required quantity. The Directors were displeased at this and assigned the job to Charnock. Charnock purchased the best quality shellack at cheap rates and sent the goods to London. The Directors were very much pleased with him. This heightened Vincent’s jealousy further.



As if to prick Charnock every day, Vincent transferred Allan Catchpole to Kasimbazar. Some devout people used to sing devotional songs at the Chief's bungalow every day for Motia. To begin with, Catchpole protested against this. Mrs. Charnock used to blow the conchshell during her daily prayer. Catchpole was not prepared to tolerate this sound.

To avoid unpleasantness, Charnock ordered the construction of a new bungalow on the riverside a little away from the factory at the Company's expense. Catchpole protested against this also. Without the consent of the Hooghly Agent and the Council, such an expenditure was not permissible, he maintained. But Charnock paid no heed to these remarks and within a short time had his new bungalow completed.

Allan Catchpole now turned towards James Hardinge who, defying the Company's rules, was taking his meals at the public table regularly. Catchpole complained to Charnock against this but without any effect. Catchpole now started an open vilification campaign against Charnock.

"Let me become the Chief of the Bay of Bengal after Vincent's retirement, and then I will teach this obstinate fellow a good lesson", Charnock thought. But Charnock's desire was not fulfilled. Vincent was dismissed with humiliation, but Willam Hedges, one of the Directors of the Company, took his place. With formal courtesy, the Company had offered an explanation. This appointment was made for the sake of necessity and not because of lack of confidence in Charnock. After Hedges, Charnock would get the post, the Company assured.

Angela came to console the broken-hearted Charnock. "You are getting dejected? Take some rest", she advised.

“Now the time has come to take eternal rest. I will resign”, he said mournfully.

“Are you mad? Angela asked. “You have overcome so many dangers in the past and will have to encounter many more in future. I haven’t got you alone for a long time. Let us have a boat ride for a few days”.

Charnock agreed and rented a small house-boat. The few days spent in the boat were like pleasant dreams to both. Angela’s warm companionship and sweet loving words rejuvenated a tired and depressed Charnock. Charnock came back with a new energy. He would hold patience for some more time. After William Hedges, his promotion was assured. Mrs. Charnock was again carrying.

\* \* \*

One day William Hedges asked Charnock and Catchpole to meet him at Mirdaudpur. Charnock met Hedges for the first time on October 20, 1682. After taking dinner with Hedges, Charnock complained to him against Catchpole and demanded his expulsion. But Hedges disregarded this.

While at Mirdaudpur, Charnock was introduced to John Baird, the Third officer of the Bay. Baird came to the bungalow of Charnock at Kasimbazar one day. He paid his homage to Mrs. Charnock and even presented her with a small beautiful ivory ship, a specimen of South Indian handicraft.

After a few months, Hedges came to Kasimbazar. He dismissed Francis Ellis and Naylor, both favourites of Charnock, on the charge of bribery and warned Hardinge not to take his meals at the Company’s table. Charnock was rebuked for giving indulgence to him.

Next day, Hedges went to Maxudabad to meet Bulchand ; Charnock prepared himself for a fresh onslaught.

Meanwhile, a devastating fire overtook Kasimbazar one day. Many houses of the Company were burnt to ashes. Taking advantage of the confusion, Mary Ann, the slave girl of John Elliot, fled away. Later, it was reported that she had embraced Islam and married one Muslim businessman, Abdul Aziz.

Angela gave birth to her third daughter. She was named Catherine.

Allen Catchpole's group arranged a big feast in honour of the Hedges. All the European officers of the Company, besides the Chief of the Dutch factory, and their wives, were invited. But in the case of Charnock, the invitation was sent for him alone. He decided not to accept the invitation, but Angela intervened. "Not only you will go to the feast, but also I will accompany you", she exclaimed.

The unexpected appearance of Mrs. Charnock at the dining table set ripples of speculations amongst the guests. "Who is this beauty with Mr. Charnock ?", they seemed to ask each other.

"This is Mrs. Charnock", Charnock introduced her to the guests. "Charming", "Queer", "Exotic", were some of the comments heard in the dinner hall.

"Is there no chair for Mrs. Charnock, Mr. Catchpole ?", Charnock asked.

Catchpole was not prepared for this frontal attack and began to stammer.

John Baird offered his seat to Mrs. Charnock.

"I am gratified at your courtesy", Angela said sweetly but firmly. "I am uninvited to this feast. I have not come here to dine but to pay my respect to the honoured guests".

Mrs. Hedges got up from her chair. "Darling, I hate to talk with such a woman. I am not going to dine with a concubine at the same table".

John Baird was quick to give a suitable reply. "We can certainly expect common courtesy from the wife of the Bay's Chief. Mrs. Charnock is in no way inferior to others in status. After Mr. Hedges is the place of Mr. Charnock. Moreover, Mrs. Charnock is a Brahmin by caste, the highest among the Hindus. She is the most beautiful of all the women present here. To show discourtesy to such a lady is beyond the realms of any etiquette".

"Am I to learn etiquette from a person who secretly wrote to Sir Josiah, abusing the Chief and his wife in a filthy language?", Mrs. Hedges retorted.

Baird felt aggrieved. "How did you come to know about that letter", he asked.

Hedges got up trying to intervene but his wife motioned him down. "Mr. Johnson, have you not seen the letter of the Third Officer with your own eyes?"

"Spy", Baird said scornfully. "Mr. Hedges has gone down so much for sheer greed for power that he did not hesitate to engage a spy to intercept my personal letter written to the directors of the Company".

"Remember, Third Officer", Hedges now said, "that letter giving false allegations will never reach Sir Josiah. I have issued orders not to despatch that letter".

“Have you become so daring as to forfeit my personal letter to the Chairman of the Company? You will feel the consequence very soon”, Baird said trembling with anger.

John Threder and Richard Barker, the Second and Third Officer of the Kasimbazar factory respectively, now came forward. They bitterly criticised the behaviour of Baird. “Even if the unexpected presence of Mrs. Charnock can be excused, how dare Mr. Baird to disregard Mr. and Mrs. Hedges?”.

“I am not going to stay for a moment at this hall”, Mrs. Hedges said and was about to leave.

“No, no, you must not leave”, Mrs. Charnock said with some delicacy. “My presence has caused irritation to you all. The fault is entirely mine. Anyway, my mission has been fulfilled and I am leaving now”.

Mrs. Charnock came out of the dinner hall accompanied by her husband. Baird also left the hall.

Baird now turned to be a powerful ally to Charnock. With his co-operation, Charnock was now able to prove to Hedges that Threder and Barker were in the habit of taking bribes from the weavers. But Hedges did not sack them even after getting documentary evidence of their guilt but ordered their transfer to another place.

Catchpole now realised that he was in danger. He voluntarily sought a transfer and was immediately sent to Malda.

Charnock reinstated Hardinge at Kasimbazar factory in defiance of Hedges's order. Powensett of Dacca and Harvey of Malda revolted against Hedges.

Rai Bulchand died all on a sudden. All his properties were confiscated by the Moghul Government.

The news of the downfall of Hedges came with lightning speed. At the directive of the East India Company, the President of the Madras factory had dismissed him. But Charnock's joy was nipped in the bud. The Third Officer John Baird was appointed in Hedges's place. The Company thus broke its own promise to Charnock twice. This time, the Directors did not even feel the necessity of offering an excuse to Charnock.

Charnock was terribly dejected in spirit.

"It is because of my vices that you had to undergo all these humiliations", Motia said sorrowfully. "I am a vicious woman. I have given my body to all people irrespective of their caste, creed and religion. So long as I remain in your family, there will no welfare for you all. Let me go away".

"Have you not done enough atonement for your sins?", Charnock asked. "For the past 21 years you have been exclusively devoted to me. You have never envied my wife and reared her daughters like your own".

But she would not listen to any arguments. She beame a Vaishnabi and one fine morning left for Nabadwip to spend the rest of her life there.

\* \* \*

The Nawab's officials adopted new tactics to harass the English merchants. Muslim money-lenders filed a suit before the Kazi against the Company for recovery of their dues. All efforts for an arbitration were in vain. The Kazi issued a decree for Rs. 43,000 against Job Charnock and his associates.

Charnock was unable to pay this huge amount and was therefore kept confined to his own bungalow by the Moghul forces. Charnock and his family spent day after day and month after month in internment. Meanwhile, John Baird, the Chief of Hooghly, died of broken health. A letter arrived secretly, asking Charnock to join immediately as the Chief of Hooghly. But Hooghly factory's new chief, Right Worshipful Job Charnock was now held captive inside his own bungalow at Kasimbazar.

One day, a palanquin arrived at Charnock's bungalow. The palanquin itself and its bearers bore the mark of wealth and prosperity of the owner.

A borqa-clad woman got down from the palanquin and was escorted to Angela's room. Charnock came to know that she was Mary Ann, who was now the wife of a wealthy Muslim businessman. She had heard the plight of Charnock while she was at Hooghly and had now come for his rescue. She spelt out a novel plan for the escape of Charnock with his family. She had a very tall Abyssinian slave girl. She would come with her and three children of different age groups frequently at Charnock's bungalow. One evening Charnock dressed like the slave girl and Mrs. Charnock like Mary Ann, along with their children could escape from the bungalow and take the boat of Mary Ann to be anchored nearby. The slave girl in Charnock's dress and Mary Ann in Mrs. Charnock's dress would stand on the verandah of the bungalow as if to see them off. As the daylight by that time would fade, the guards at the family bungalow could be deceived in this way.

The plan was successful and one evening Charnock and his fled from Kasimbazar, but when the boat was near Hooghly, Charnock's conscience began to prick him. He became worried when he thought how much risk Mary had taken for him.

“Angela, to save my life I fled like a coward, knowing fully well that this might even cost her life. Let us go back to Kasimbazar and see what has happened to her.” Angela at once agreed.

The boat turned towards Kasimbazar and on the way they deposited their children at Nabadwip under the custody of Motia. They also released this boat and rented a new one at Nabadwip.

Disguised as Muslim traders, they reached Kasimbazar one evening. Under the cover of darkness they entered the bungalow only to see that it was ransacked by the Moghul forces and that Mary Ann and her slave girl had been beheaded. Sundar Kahar, who had accompanied them from Nabadwip, and Charnock dug two graves for the dead bodies.

Before laying the body of Mary Ann for eternal rest, Charnock put a warm loving kiss on the cold forehead of Mary Ann for the first and last time in his life.

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#### Part IV

Immediately after arriving at Hooghly, Job Charnock assumed full charge of the factory in his strong hands. His escape from Kasimbazar had created a great stir among the Moghul Government circles, but the Moghul force did not dare launch a direct attack on the well-fortified factory at Hooghly.

Regular parades of the Company's armed force were being held at the courtyard of the factory. Numbering about 400, the Company's army comprised British, Portuguese, Anglo-Indian, Rajput and some local people.

The British had also a military base at Chandernagore. Various types of boats on the river, too, were equipped with arms and armament.



The commander of the whole British force was Colonel Job Charnock, who had no knowledge of warfare but had indomitable courage and vast experience. Over and above this, his heart was burning with the terrible zeal for vengeance. He could not forget the shameless exploitation of the Moghuls day after day, the humiliation and disgrace of his captive life and last but not the least, the brutal murder of Mary Ann.

The Company's Directors had at last realised the gravity and urgency of the situation. James II, King of England, had given permission to the Company to despatch a number of ships loaded with arms and ammunition and troops to Eastern India. Five ships and three frigates with soldiers were due to arrive at Balasore. A War Council had been formed in London to conduct the warfare with the Moghuls.

Job Charnock, with his entire force, would take shelter inside the ships as they were anchored at Balasore. From there, an ultimatum would be sent to the Nawab of Bengal demanding adequate compensation for the loss sustained by the Company and seeking unrestricted trading rights with freedom from exploitation, it was decided.

On the Eastern front, the British warships were ordered to attack the Moghul Merchant Navy in the Bay of Bengal and on the Western front the forces were ordered to attack the Mecca-bound pilgrim ships. The forces were asked to proceed to Chittagong, the prosperous port captured by the Moghuls from the King of Arakan, a few years ago. British soldiers were further instructed to occupy Chittagong under the leadership of Job Charnock, who would be the first Governor of that port.

Of course, the Directors of the Company, had issued a note of warning. There should be no violence against women and

children. Special care should be taken not to destroy any church, mosque or temple. War has been forced on the Company, but its ultimate objective is peace.

On the other side, the Moghuls also did not remain inactive at the news of British preparations. They erected eleven batteries at various points on the coast of Hooghly and increased their armed forces. About 4,500 soldiers consisting of cavalry and infantry, were kept ready under the command of Fouzdar Abdul Ghani. Emboldened by the reinforcement, the Fouzdar began to show signs of militancy. He tried to harass the British traders in various ways and asked the grocers in the bazar not to supply any foodstuff to the foreigners. The war of nerves went on like this.

Charnock was aware that he would have to leave Hooghly very soon, but was gaining time to arrange for despatch of 14,000 bags of saltpetre and other commodities to England. He was patiently awaiting the arrival of the British troops, but there was no sign of the promised reinforcements from England. One ship was destroyed on her way, while two others could not cross the coast of Europe. The other ships, however, were on their way to Hooghly.

Charnock was placed in a predicament. With a small navy and handful of soldiers, he had to face the mighty Moghul force. Meanwhile, he became infuriated at the news of the capture of three British soldiers by the Fouzdar's peons. These three soldiers were buying provisions from the bazar as part of their routine duty. Charnock remembered his own captive life and immediately ordered Captain Leslie to proceed with one company of soldiers and bring them back from their captivity.

Abdul Ghani's soldiers attacked Captain Leslie's forces and after some skirmishes, the Moghuls fled away from the battlefield. They were alerted by the resistance of the British force and there were strong rumours in Hooghly town that the British would soon launch an attack on a massive scale. Out of panic, the Moghuls set fire to their own barracks, which were situated near the British factory. The fire spread rapidly and engulfed the old godown of the English Company. All the valuable goods, including the saltpetre bags, were gutted. Moreover, the Moghuls started shelling from their batteries towards the English ships on the Hooghly. The ships, however, managed to escape by sailing out of the cannon's range.

Charnock ordered the movement of the British troops from the Chandernagore barracks to Hooghly. He wanted to capture the batteries by any means and break the morale of the Moghul troops. Under the command of Captain Richardson, a group of British soldiers was sent to attack the batteries but they were repulsed after encountering stiff resistance from the Moghuls.

Another group of British soldiers under the command of Captain Arbuthnot attacked the Moghuls. This time they fought desperately, and the Moghuls could not withstand their attack. Many soldiers were killed and wounded on the Moghul side and the rest fled away leaving their cannons. The victorious British troops advanced up to the palace of the Fouzdar, but he had already managed his escape in disguise. The whole of Hooghly town appeared to be under the control of the British.

Charnock ordered the shelling of Hooghly from the river. Cannons from ketches and sloops at Gholghat started shelling round the clock, destroying many houses on the river front. The British captured one Moghul ship.

Fouzdar Abdul Ghani was a clever man. He now started negotiation for peace through the mediation of the Dutch. The whole of Hooghly was now agog with British might and chivalry. The story of Job Charnock's leadership and bravery spread like legends far and wide.

But Charnock realised that it would not be possible to hold Hooghly in the event of a determined attack by the gigantic Moghul army. Two of the promised warships had arrived, one of which was leaking and taken to Hijili for repair. It was, therefore, now prudent to make peace with the Moghuls. He was also anxious to remove all the goods from Hooghly to a safer place.

Peace was established on condition that the Fouzdar would not obstruct the British from procuring their labour force and foodstuffs.

On the other side, Nawab Shayista Khan was not inactive. As soon as he heard about the British aggressiveness at Hooghly, he ordered the attack of the Patna factory. The Moghuls looted the factory and arrested all the people there. He despatched 300 soldiers under the command of different zamindars towards Hooghly.

Labouring day and night, Charnock was able to despatch saltpetre to London. He gave up the idea of occupying Chittagong in these circumstances and asked for more ships from Madras.

The Moghul Fouzdar started appeasing Charnock for a settlement. He offered his help to obtain the Emperor's firman but meanwhile Charnock could carry on trade on the strength

of the Nawab's order. Charnock was not the man to be bluffed again by the Moghul's assurance and demanded compensation to the tune of Rs. 66,25,000 on various accounts. As if to please the British, the Nawab transferred Abdul Ghani to some other place.

Charnock knew that this domination by the British was a temporary one. The Moghuls could occupy Hooghly any moment by the land route. He wanted to establish a British base at such a place which would not be vulnerable to attack easily. The British had an advantage on the water front and so he planned to set up a base near the mouth of the Bay of Bengal.

With this idea in mind, Charnock left Hooghly with his whole forces on 20th December, 1688. Sutanuti, situated on the east coast of the Hooghly river, caught the imagination of Charnock. He laid the anchor of his ship at the **ghat** of the Sutanuti village. The village derived its name from its small market, where trading in thread balls (sutanuti) was going on for some time. To trade with foreigners, some families of Basaks and Setts had settled at Govindapur village, a few miles downstream. There they built houses by clearing jungles and erected a temple of Govindaji. South of Sutanuti was the Calcutta village. Fishes were plentiful in the river, the land was fertile, and birds and animals could be hunted in the nearby marshy lands. There was no dearth of foodstuffs here. Charnock was inclined to establish his base here.

Mrs. Charnock, too, liked the place. It was not congested like Hooghly. She could walk on foot here without taking any escort. One day she went to Govindapur by boat to offer **pujas** at the Govindaji's temple. On hearing this, Sett Babus

came to the temple and paid their homage to Mrs Charnock. They introduced her to the female members of their families. Mrs. Charnock could now speak Bengali well. They took her to Kalighat to show the goddess Kali there.

Mrs. Charnock sacrificed a pair of goats before the goddess and prayed for the welfare of her husband and daughters.

After returning home, Mrs. Charnock cooked the meat of the sacrificed goat and offered it to her husband. She also pasted a mark of the goddess's vermilion on the forehead of Charnock very respectfully, and said. "The **pandas** at the temple were saying that victory is certain if you put on this vermilion". Then pausing for a few moments, she said : "I have heard a very amusing story about you from Sett's wife. Charnock Saheb had burnt the houses of the Moghuls in Hooghly by focussing the sun's rays through a magnifying glass from a ship".

Charnock laughed. "Do you know what I have heard from Basak Babu ? The Moghuls had stretched an iron chain across the river Hooghly so that our ships could not escape. And I had cut the chain with one stroke of my sword and came away with my ships".

"The people of Bengal excel in the art of spreading tales", he remarked.

"Really", Angella said, "so many strange tales are created by the inventive brains of the people. Any way, I am tired of this gypsy life. I wish I could settle here permanently in a pucca house built on the riverside".

"I have the same desire, Angella", he said. "But the future is uncertain. No settlement has yet been made with the

Moghuls. Negotiations are under way. If there is no settlement, we have to pack up again from here. Really, it would have been wonderful if we could build a fort here. This place gives a natural protection from invasions from outside. It would not be easy for the Moghuls to attack us from the west by crossing the river. The east, the north and west are full of marshy lands and dense forests. It is an ideal place for building a fort”.

The sound of gunfire was heard in the distance. A few moments afterwards Charnock’s eldest daughter came running to them with a pair of dead ducks in her hand. Charles Eyre, a writer of the Company, was seen behind her. “Papa, papa, Mr. Eyre shot these ducks before me”, Mary said.

Charles Eyre had come to India about ten years ago and had already gained some experience by touring the different factories at Balasore, Dacca, Malda and other places. He was an energetic young man of 25 years. Charnock was very pleased with his work.

“Well done my boy”, Charnock said.

“Mummy, we have to roast the duck today. Should I invite Mr. Eyre to dine with us”, Mary asked.

“Well, well, my boy, have dinner with us tonight”, Charnock said.

“Thank you, Sir”, Eyre said. “Excuse me for going home to have my dress changed”.

Mary was now eight-years old. Her face resembled her mother’s to some extent and she looked very pretty at this age. She was evidently attracted to Charles Eyre.

Job Charnock had found out a suitable place for trading. South of Sutanuti was the Calcutta village, on the east of which was an area known as Baitakkhana. There was a big banyan tree at this place and merchants from different places assembled under its shade to take rest.

Charnock started going in a palanquin regularly. Puffing up a hookah, he made arrangements for exchange of different commodities with the merchants there. Charnock's bravery, the pomp and grandeur accompanying him and his honesty in business impressed the local merchants very much and trading went on briskly. The merchants requested Charnock to settle here permanently because as a centre of foreign trade, Calcutta was very favourably situated. But the Company's present design was to capture Chittagong.

Christmas came and Charnock celebrated the festival with great pomp. Nawab Shayista Khan sent Mr. Watts to Sutanuti to negotiate the terms and conditions for a permanent armistice.

At last, a draft agreement comprising 12 clauses was reached between the two parties. All these clauses were honourable to the Company. Two people were sent to Dacca to finalise the agreement. The beginning of 1687 seemed to augur well for the British. But the Nawab negatived the agreement and sent 2,000 soldiers to Hooghly to expel the British.

Colonel Job Charnock now ordered packing up from Sutanuti and under his leadership, the British forces set fire to the Emperor's salt godown south of Govindapur on 9th February 1687. They occupied the Moghul fort at Thana on 11th. The fort on the Hijili Island was captured without a fight. One ketch was placed to guard the mouth of the river. Three ships



were sent to Balasore and the remaining ones and soldiers were posted at different points of the island by Charnock.

The Hijili fort was one in name only. The walls were very thin and the fort was situated some 500 yards away from the coast in the interior of the island. Charnock ordered digging of trenches around the fort.

With the coming in of Monsoon, there was acute shortage of foodstuffs in Hijili and many inhabitants of the island fled away for fear of famine. Added to this, about 200 soldiers became sick and bed-ridden. Every day some soldiers were dying of sickness. The Moghuls besieged the Island from all sides making the procurement of foodstuffs more difficult.

The Charnock family also was not spared. Angela became bed-ridden and Catherine was sick.

On the other side of the river, the Moghuls had established long-range cannons and movement of British ships was affected.

Meanwhile, the Nawab's Bakshi, Abdul Samad, arrived at Hooghly with an army of 12,000. Epidemic spread in the island and took the lives of 200 soldiers, sailors and other employees.

Charnock was now left with a handful of soldiers, numbering about 100 for Hijili's defence. On the other side, the Moghuls had a few thousands of soldiers.

Mrs. Charnock had no remission of fever. Catherine was a little better. Mary became ill.

In the afternoon of 28th May, frightening news was received. The Moghuls had launched a terrific attack and after crossing the river captured the British base for cannons. They slaughtered

captain Richardson and took away Mrs. Richardson and her son as captives. Encouraged by their success, Moghuls advanced up to the moat of the Hijili fort.

Charnock now himself jumped into the battle. With a small detachment of soldiers, he put up a valiant fight against the Moghuls. Hand-to-hand fight ensued in the darkness of night. The Moghuls could not withstand the fearful British attack and retreated by the dawn after being severely mauled.

But when Charnock took an account of the dead and wounded on his side, he was terribly upset. At this stage, it was not possible to run away from the fort. In that case, not only the fort would be lost, but the enemy might also capture some ships of the Company. Charnock felt very disheartened.

Angela, from her sick bed, gave encouragement to Charnock. "You have done your best. Now leave everything to God. I have offered **pujas** to the goddess at Kalighat. As I cannot get up, please go to the small ante-room and put on the vermilion of the goddess kept there. Victory is certain for you".

Angela's faith in God gave new inspiration to Charnock. He entered the room after taking off his shoes and put on the vermilion on his forehead. His mind was filled with a sense of deep satisfaction. He returned to Angela's bedside.

Angela's eyes became brightened as she noticed vermilion mark on her husband's forehead. "Will you keep a request of mine?", she asked. "What?"

"Please give me a loaded pistol".

"What will you do with it? Will you, too fight?"

"No. I am a Brahmin and unlike the Kshatriya, I have not learnt to fight. But I know how to die. I heard the Moghuls had taken away Captain Richardson's wife and son. Before becoming a prisoner in the hands of the Moghuls, I like to kill myself with a pistol".

"I rescued you once from death. I cannot hand over to you the weapon of death".

Mrs. Charnock smiled. "I know you would give me this answer. I have made my own arrangement for my destruction".

"What is that?", Charnock asked surprisingly.

"Look at this", she pulled out a shining dagger from beneath her pillow. "Don't snatch this weapon from me"

"No, Charnock would not do that. It is hundred times better to commit suicide than to be disgraced by the Moghuls".

"Will you keep another request of mine?", she asked.

"What is that?"

"Send our daughters to the ship. I heard that the Moghuls had taken away Captain Richardson's children with them. I don't want your daughters to spend their lives like slave-girls in Moghul harems".

"Excuse me, Angela. This is not possible. If I send my daughters to the ship, the morale of my soldiers will be completely broken. They won't be able to put up a fight again".

"You are right dear", Angela said. "Being sick for a long time, I have become very weak in mind. Let them stay with me. If the Moghuls conquer the fort, then before committing suicide, I will kill my daughters with my own hand".

Angela's face seemed to glitter with firm determination.

Moghul soldiers again invaded the fort. They surrounded the fort from three sides. Charnock placed two cannons on an elevated piece of ground in between the fort and the river coast. Shelling started from these two cannons alternatively towards the river. The Moghuls could not advance towards the river. This was the only route which was free for movement of Charnock's forces. Charnock made preparations for the retreat of his army by this route in the midst of incessant rains. As soon as he got some respite, he sent all the goods from the fort to the ship. The sick soldiers took shelter in the ship. Four days and nights were spent in this predicament.

Suddenly there was a silver lining on the dark horizon. Under the command of Captain Denham, a ship arrived at Hijili from Europe. With an army of 70 soldiers, Captain Denham attacked the enemy, captured some of their cannons and after setting fire to their barracks came back to the fort. The Moghuls were taken aback by this sudden attack. Now Charnock was determined to break the morale of the enemy by any means.

A novel plan to deceive the Moghuls was thrashed out. British soldiers would go to the river-side from the fort quietly one by one in the evening and after assembling there would march back to the fort, blowing their trumpets and raising their guns. After returning to the fort, they would repeat the same exercise and the process would continue for the whole night.

The plan was put into action. The Moghuls were completely baffled. They thought countless British soldiers had arrived from England by the ship.

Charnock spent a sleepless night, anxiously awaiting the impact of his plan on the enemy. Mrs. Charnock too, remained awake whole night, praying to the Almighty in her prayer room.

Next morning, the British were jubilant to see that the Moghuls had flown the flag of peace.

After a few days of negotiation, an honourable settlement was reached between the British and the Nawab's Bakshi, Abdul Samad, subject to the Nawab's approval. The Englishmen were allowed to return to their old factories and carry on their trade as before.

According to the terms of the armistice, Charnock handed back the charge of the Hijili fort to the Moghuls on 11th July and left the place with all his people ceremoniously.

Sailing against the high tide, Charnock came to Uluberia on the west coast of the Hooghly and remained there for three months. So long as the Nawab's approval was not received, he could not move out the ships north of Thana. At last the Nawab's **firman** was received but Charnock was not at all pleased with the ambiguous language of the **firman**, which implied that the war against the Moghuls had not yet ended.

Negotiations continued with the Nawab through the Vakil. Charnock did not like Uluberia at all. Sutanuti, from across the river, seemed to be inviting him constantly. One day, he came back to Sutanuti with his family and force, for the second time.

"The Moghuls have understood that my husband possesses great might. Do you know, how many tales are heard about your bravery?", Mrs. Charnock told him one day.

“But that fame is useless” said Charnock despondently.

“Do you know what my bosses have written to me?”

“Definitely they have appreciated your valour”, Angela said confidently.

“Not at all. They have levelled serious charges against me and have alleged that I am very peace-loving. My fault is that I didn’t support the Chittagong expedition. As I have pointed out the flaws in their unrealistic plan, they have become very much enraged. They have stated that the reason for my inclination towards peace is that I want to go back to Bengal to look after my own private business. Angela, this I had to hear after serving them for a long period of 32 years with unstinted devotion to duty”.

“What is the good of sticking to such a service?”, Angela said. “You had better resign. You have enough introductions in this place on the strength of which you can make a decent living. Ours is a small family and we can maintain ourselves quite comfortably with such an income”.

“That is not possible for me, Angela. I have detested the interlopers throughout my life. I cannot myself become an interloper in the last stage of my life. I can never be unfaithful to my Company”.

“Then what will you do now?”

“I will write everything clearly to my bosses and make a last attempt to conquer Chittagong. Let me see, if my luck favours me in my becoming the first Governor of Chittagong”.

“At last you are also relying on fate?”, Angela said amusingly.

"That is like a contagious disease", he replied. "My long association with you has made me a fatalist. I have learned to respect your gods and goddesses. I have put on the vermillion of goddess Kali, sacrificed cocks to Panch Pir. For these reasons, the chaplains are very angry with me. They do not dare to tell me anything because I am the Right Honourable Job Charnock, Esq. The other day, the chaplain came to me with a complaint against Charles Eyre. He was becoming Indianised. I didn't pay any heed to his complaint".

"Eyre is a nice boy", Mrs. Charnock said. "I wish I could make him my son-in-law. Your Mary has grown up although she is tender in age. She loves Eyre".

"Are you mad?", Charnock said. "Do you ask me to give that nine-year-old girl in marriage?"

"Why not? Child marriage is quite in vogue in this country".

"No, no. I don't like that. Moreover, Eyre is much older in age than Mary".

"What's of that? You are so senior to me in age, but didn't you marry me?"

"You are an exception. You are an angel, you are Angela".

"Mary is also my daughter. She loves Eyre".

"What does a nine-year old child know about love?"

"Girls of this country become mature at an early age".

"But we don't know what is in Eyre's mind. He is a pure Englishman. He may not like to marry an Eurasian girl. I cannot impose on him the duty of marrying Mary only because I happen to be his boss".

"All right, you see one day that Eyre himself will open his heart to us. But make sure that he gets promotion."

The orderly brought in a letter. It was from the Company. This time the tone of the letter was very mild. The Directors had eloquently praised Charnock's devotion to duty and faithfulness to the Company. But they gave a pin-prick at the end. They had made Charnock responsible for the army's plight at Hijili fort. They had directed Charnock to establish the colony at Uluberia. The river was deep there. A dock could be built there so that the biggest ships could be repaired at that place. Charnock should obtain a **firman** from the Emperor and build a well-fortified fort there like fort St. George at Madras.

No, Charnock would not establish the colony at Uluberia. The Moghuls could attack that place by land any moment. Sutanuti was definitely better. Charnock sent the reply to the Company, strongly pleading for Sutanuti.

At last Charnock's peristent efforts bore the desired result. The Company had approved Charnock's plan for Sutanuti.

But meanwhile, a new order from Shayista Khan was received, asking the British to return to Hooghly. He prohibited the Company to build any pucca house at Sutanuti and demanded a heavy compensation for their losses as a result of the warfare.

Charnock, however, was firmly determined not to leave Sutanuti. He would buy land from the natives and build the factory here. The river was deep here, ensuring the movement of big ships. A great port would come up in course of time. A fort would have to be built on the vacant land at Calcutta village. Charnock's dream of a new big city would be a reality here.



Now the only course left open to Charnock was to appease the Nawab. He decided to send Charles Eyre with a member of the Council to Dacca as his messengers. There they would try to persuade the Nawab to allow the British to build a colony at Calcutta village.

Mrs. Charnock was worried when she came to know of this. "At last you are sending Eyre to a tiger's den?"

"I have great faith in Eyre", Charnock said. "I see immense future possibilities in him. When I am not alive, he will be the Governor of Calcutta one day".

"That is a thing of the future", she said. "I want to make him my son-in-law. If anything happens to him, I will have endless sorrows throughout my life".

"Angela, are you also becoming weak-minded with your advancement in age? We have come to Hindustan from a far off country after crossing seven seas to embrace dangers every moment. Where is the time to lead a gentle peaceful life? We have to establish ourselves through fighting. I want my future son-in-law not to run away for fear of danger. Can't you see the condition of our business? Our factories are closed; we have no man-power; our soldiers are sick. Our plight has reached the climax. Under these circumstances, our future greatly depends on the success of our mission to the Nawab. That is why we have to send a dependable man. Otherwise, I have to go myself".

"No, no", Mrs. Charnock said embarrassingly, "the Nawab is very much angry with you. He won't spare you if he gets you in his clutches. All right, let Eyre go. I will send my votive offering to the Kalighat temple".

Next day, Eyre, accompanied by a member of the Council, left for Dacca.

Charnock convened a meeting of the Council to discuss the plan for the new city. Good news had arrived that Shayista Khan had left Bengal, and now Bahadur Khan had succeeded him. It was felt that the Nawab might yield to the request of the British merchants.

Charnock himself had drawn up a plan. The Bankshall would be located near the river side. The ships would take shelter here. The fort would be built near this place. From here, a road would go straight to Baitakkhana. Provisions were made for the factory, godown, church, park, tank, roads and even a Kali temple in accordance with the wish of Mrs. Charnock.

No final decision, however, could be taken at the meeting in the absence of the Nawab's approval, which was yet to come.

But on 20th September, 1688, an unexpected development shattered Charnock's dream of establishing a new city at Calcutta-Sutanuti.

Captain Heath, with his 6½-foot tall figure, appeared like a comet at Sutanuti. Nominated by the Court of Directors, he had been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Bay of Bengal. Everything had been arranged secretly. It was evident that Charnock had been superseded by him.

Charnock had no other alternative but to welcome Captain Heath under straitened circumstances.

Immediately on his arrival, Captain Heath convened a war council. He wanted to know where was the fort at Sutanuti.

"The Moghuls have prohibited us to build the fort", Charnock replied.

"Then why did you make so much recommendations for Sutanuti?", Heath wanted to know.

"I have intimated the reasons to the Court Sutanuti-Calcutta is a natural fort. The river, its marshy land and the forest will protect it", Charnock argued.

"These are all reasons without a substance. How can we fight here without any fort? We will have to leave Sutanuti. See this letter from the Court".

"How's that? Now there is a distinct possibility of reaching an understanding with the Nawab. It will not be wise to leave Sutanuti at this stage". The majority of the Council members concurred with Charnock.

"Let the Nawab go to hell", Heath roared. "I am the Commander of the British forces, not you. I am giving you time up to November 10, by which date you should pack up and get yourself prepared for the Chittagong expedition. We will occupy Chittagong".

Charnock was red with anger. "You have got only 300 soldiers at your command. Do you expect to conquer Chittagong with this force?" he mockingly said.

"I am Captain Heath. I am a naval officer and not a trader like you. It is against my nature to worry about anything. We will definitely conquer Chittagong".

"True, I am a trader; but didn't this trader maintain the existence of the Company in Bihar and Bengal so long? Didn't

this trader fight at Hooghly and Hijili ? Today you are boasting of your courage, but didn't this trader keep thousands of Moghul soldiers at bay with a handful of people ?”

“Worshipful Mr. Charnock”, Captain Heath ridiculed, “it is only because of this businessmen-like mentality that we are stuck up now in the muds of Sutanuti. Now you will see what is called a real warfare. Making an alliance with the King of Arakan, we will conquer Chittagong positively. The deadline for leaving Sutanuti is November 10. That is my order”.

Charnock lay down on his bed terribly dejected. Angela came to his bedside and caressed his forehead with her hands. Charnock's tears swept away his dream of a new city.

For the second time, the British left Sutanuti before November 10.

Charnock and his family boarded a medium-sized hardy ship, **The Defence**. It had come straight from London.

The British navy arrived at Balasore. Capt. Heath was evidently disregarding Charnock and without consulting him, sent soldiers in small boats to invade the town.

On the fourth day, the victorious British troops returned with a huge quantity of booty, which included some costly articles and even gold ornaments.

These articles had been looted from the house of the Moghul Governor of Balasore, who had been a fast friend of the British so long. Under orders from Capt. Heath, the British soldiers had not only ransacked the whole town but had also raped the women freely. Even the female inmates of the Governor's house and the women who took shelter inside the churches had not been spared.

Charnock seemed to be burning with rage. "Are we robbers? Are you not ashamed of committing such barbarous acts being Englishmen?" he charged the sailors.

Mrs. Charnock, too, shuddered to hear this grim tale of plunder and rape. "Worshipful Mr. Charnock, are you the Agent of the Honourable East India Company?", she harshly asked.

"Angela, what do you mean by this joke?"

"It is not the time for cutting a joke", she said. "The time has come for judgment. I want justice from the Hon'ble Agent of the Company if, of course, he is still in that post".

'You know I am still the Agent'.

"The good reputation of your nation has been besmeared by the atrocities committed by your Capt. Heath. Do something to stop his autocratic deeds".

"You are quite right. Something will have to be done. Let me consult Ellis and Peachey, the two other members of the Council".

Charnock convened a war council in the big cabin of the **Defence**. Discussions centred round the brutal acts committed by British armed forces under the command of Capt. Heath. But Heath was the supreme commander in this region and to go against him meant mutiny or revolt. Charnock would be the last person to break discipline. After serving faithfully for so many years, it would be impossible for him to rise actively against the commander-in-chief appointed by the Company at the fag end of his life.

"At least we should lodge our protest with the Captain", Ellis said. Peachey supported the proposal.

Charnock consented, but he was in favour of writing in detail the whole incident direct to the Court of Directors.

At this time, Captain Heath and Captain Haddock entered the cabin.

"What you people are conspiring now", they asked. "You traders know only to create complications. I am a soldier. I know only to make a direct assault", Heath said.

"And you know also how to let loose a reign of terror by plundering and looting, how to get the sanctity of the churches destroyed, how to get women raped", Charnock scornfully said.

"These are parts of the warfare" Heath said. "You are all traders and are, therefore, inclined to weigh everything before you act. We have no such qualms. Still, I am surprised to hear such pious talks from you, Worshipful Mr. Charnock".

"What makes you surprised?"

"Because you do not respect the customs and formalities of the Christian religion. You worship like the Hindus, and even live with a Hindu woman. Am I to hear religious sermons from you?"

"I won't tolerate such disrespectful remarks about my legal wife", Charnock retorted. "Be careful in your talks Captain".

Capt. Haddock hastily intervened. "Well, well, we are quarrelling amongst ourselves uselessly at a time when the Nawab has sent a message. He has intimated that Captain Heath's proposal can be accepted if the Agent himself writes a letter in support of this proposal.

Charnock was somewhat pacified, "What is this?" he said with false surprise. "At last the Nawab wants armistice with an ordinary trader? No, no, why should I write such a letter. Let our Honourable Captain realise armistice by the strength of his cannons".

"Definitely I will realise it", Capt. Heath boasted. "This time I will show the real game at Chittagong. Now you are to write a letter to the Nawab".

"What is your idea?" Charnock asked.

"I don't divulge war secrets to a trader", Heath said.

"Then I will take the responsibility of negotiating with the Moghuls for the armistice. Please don't poke your nose into it".

Job Charnock wrote the letter, listing the terms of the armistice and sent it through Mr. Ravenhill to the Governor of Balasore.

Negotiations continued for some days, but the Governor could not accept any of the terms in the absence of the Nawab's final approval.

All on a sudden, on December 23, Capt. Heath ordered the party to pack up from Balasore and proceeded to Chittagong.

The British navy arrived at Chittagong Road on January 17, 1689, but as Charnock had apprehended, Chittagong was well fortified. The Moghuls had taken away Chittagong from the King of Arakan a few years ago. As the enemies were not very far away, there was no dearth of precautions on the part of the Moghuls.

A war council was convened on January 21. The strength of the Company comprised 115 British soldiers and 179 mercenary Portuguese soldiers. It was ridiculous to fight the Moghuls with this small force. It was better to sign an armistice with the Nawab by proposing to help the Moghuls against the Arakanese. Heath protested, but this time nobody supported him.

As soon as it was known that the Moghuls had sent a fresh contingent of 500 troops to Chittagong, the British navy, under orders from Capt. Heath, proceeded towards Arakan.

Here, too, Capt. Heath was disappointed. The Arkanese King refused to help the British against the Moghuls. The British navy again had to weigh anchor and this time sailed for Madras. The dream of conquering Chittagong faded into insignificance.

After arriving at Madras, Job Charnock was patiently awaiting the reply from the Nawab of Bengal. There was no British factory in Eastern parts of India, but Charnock was the Agent in name only.

Good news came at long last. Nawab Ibrahim Khan of Bengal himself had written to Job Charnock at Madras, requesting him to return to his province. The Nawab had released all British prisoners and had now sent his warm invitation to Charnock to reopen the trade in Bengal. But Charnock was not inclined to accept the invitation so easily. He replied that he would resume trading activities afresh only after obtaining the Emperor's **firman**. The Nawab explained that this would mean considerable delay and gave every assurance from his side that there was no cause for any apprehension. Charnock decided to go back to Bengal.



**Part V**

The **Princess**, a sturdily-built ship, had arrived from London at Madras. Charnock, with his whole family and party, boarded this ship on his voyage back to Bengal.

At Balasore, Charnock left this ship and boarded the ketch **Madopollam** as it was not safe to enter the Hooghly with such a big ship as the **Princess**.

Charnock felt as if he were returning to his homeland. Everything in this region seemed familiar to him. The time was August-end but the monsoon was still active and it was raining intermittently.

He sent Stanley and Macreath to take charge of the Hooghly factory. The **Madapollam** sailed towards Sutanuti slowly.

Sunday, August 24, 1690, was a memorable day for Charnock as the **Madopollam** arrived at Sutanuti **ghat** in the noon.

This was the third time that Charnock set his foot on Sutanuti. The previous two occasions were marked with disappointment, but success was assured this time, Charnock thought himself.

But what a weather ! It was raining heavily, but Charnock was undaunted in his spirit. Through this trying weather would be laid the foundation of a new city, which would surpass Bombay and Madras.

The native merchants were jubilant on the shore at the return of Charnock. Braving the rains, they were beating drums and blowing horns in the exuberance of their joy. Job Charnock cheerfully got down on the muddy **ghat** amidst rains. The natives surrounded him. Charnock was overwhelmed by the warm wel-

come from the natives. Suddenly he noticed that Sundar Kahar was making his way through the crowd towards him. Sundar embraced Charnock. "How is Motia?", was Charnock's anxious query.

Sunder kept silent for some time and then said: "My sister is no longer in this world."

"What do you mean?"

"She had an attack of cholera and died suddenly", Sundar said. "I have tried to contact you in many places but could not trace your whereabouts. Saheb, her last wish was that I should serve you for the remaining period of my life."

Charnock was terribly aggrieved; but this was no time to express his sorrow. He proceeded towards the barracks through water and mud. But where are the barracks? Most of the mud-houses in which the British lived had collapsed. The rest were uninhabitable. Charnock's cottage, however, was still standing intact, but it needed repair. It seemed everything had to be built anew. For that day the British took shelter in the boats.

The Nawab had not yet given permission to the British to build pucca houses. Mud-huts were, therefore, built for godowns, kitchen, residence of employees etc.

Many problems cropped up in the construction of the new colony, but Charnock settled all of them satisfactorily by convening meetings of the council from time to time.

Mrs. Charnock now pressed for the marriage of Mary. Charles Eyre had returned from Dacca and felt gratified at the marriage proposal. He had a true love for Mary.

Wedding bells, therefore, rang for the marriage of Charles Eyre with Mary Charnock. The marriage ceremony was celebrated for several days at Sutanuti-Calcutta with great pomp and grandeur. Capt. Hill, Secretary of the Council, made elaborate arrangements for entertainments. His wife herself dressed Mary like an English bride. The marriage took place according to Christian rites at a new church inside a cottage. Since it was the marriage of the Agent's daughter, all noteworthy persons participated in the festivity joyfully. The flag of the King Emperor was hoisted with the soldiers playing the band. Cannons and guns were fired far and wide. Many drank punch and wines to their heart's content. The only exception was Mr. Bradyll, who could not join the festivity whole-heartedly.

Roger Bradyll was the Chief of the Patna factory when Charnock declared war against the Moghuls at Hooghly. The Nawab arrested Bradyll. But King, who was a fugitive British sergeant, volunteered to be disguised as Bradyll and embraced captivity, giving Bradyll the opportunity to flee. King was still rotting in the jail at Patna. The Nawab had demanded a ransom of Rs. 1,500 for King's release.

In a fit of drunkenness, Bradyll quarrelled with Charnock, the subject being King's release. Charnock asked Bradyll to get the release of King by paying Rs. 1,500.

"Where shall I get so much money ?", Bradyll said. "No agent has made me his son-in-law".

"Will you please state more clearly what do you want to say, Mr. Bradyll", Charnock retorted.

"Not today", Bradyll replied. "The day when you will be no longer Worshipful Mr. Charnock, but a mere Mr. Charnock,

I will tell you that day. But remember, that day is not very far off. The old Company is being wound-up and a new one set up in its stead. I will then see how you are entertained by Madras Court”.

Bradyll burst into an hysterical laughter and Capt. Hill had had to push him out of the dinner hall.

Charnock, too, had heard rumours about the abolition of the old Company. All his influence was over the Directors of the old Company. It was quite possible that the new Directors after assuming the office might sack Charnock, he thought.

The work of building the new city was not progressing according to schedule. The Moghuls had not yet given permission to the Company to erect pucca houses, not to speak of a fort.

A road from the banyan tree at Baitakkhana was now under construction, but the workers were scared off by tigers and snakes which infested the area. Charnock engaged several armed guards to protect the workers.

Centring round the market of Sutanuti, the natives had dwellings previously. Now the black town began to expand in that area.

The nerve centre of the British was the Calcutta village. In the south was the dense forest of Govindapur. So the work of clearing the jungles was started at the Calcutta village. A sizeable area had been cleared and new traders, including the Portuguese and Armenians, began to flock to the place.

Charnock purchased a frigate from the Portuguese by paying a heavy price. It was a warship well-equipped with big cannons.

As the Moghuls had not yet permitted the British to build a fort on the land, Charnock planned to use this frigate as a water fort in case of emergency.

The **firman** of the Emperor came on February 17, 1691, granting the company unrestricted trading rights on payment of an annual tax of Rs. 3,000 only. Thus, the efforts of all these years became fruitful at last.

The British announced their success far and wide by firing each and every cannon and gun on land as well as on water.

Under the banyan tree of Baitakhana, people of all castes and religions assembled to rejoice over this good news. The Setts and Basacks came to congratulate Charnock with presents. “You are the King of Sutanuti, King of Calcutta”, they declared.

Raja Charnock was looking at his own image reflected in the mirror and smiling himself. He was not aware when Mrs. Charnock came and stood behind him.

“What’s the matter? You seem to be very happy looking at your own face?”, she said in good humour.

“No, no. I am looking at Raja Charnock and ridiculing myself”, he said.

“Why? What is there to ridicule Raja Charnock? Why, is he not a Raja?”

“Really, why not? When he has got such a lovely queen? But where is the capital?”

“This Sutanuti is the capital”.

“What a capital. What a capital. It consists only of some thatched huts and tents. Even if there has been a palace and a fort, it could have deserved that name”.

“Let there be no such things.. The capital will be established in the hearts of your people. Do you know what a tale about my Raja’s bravery have I heard today at the bathing **ghat** of Sutanuti ?”

“What gossiping tale you have heard again ?”

“I went to bathe in the river today in a palanquin escorted by armed guards. The women-folk at the **ghat** at first got very much scared but when I assured them that there was no cause for fear, they came near and surrounded me. They said as if you had gone to see the Emperor in the south accompanied by a Vakil. After bowing the Emperor, you stood before him. At this time the Vazir said, ‘Your Honour, the arms and armaments of your soldiers are exhausted’. You said, ‘Don’t you worry about it. I am bringing them from the ship’. The Emperor was pleased to receive the arms and armaments from you. He said, ‘Speak out Firingi, what it is you want from me ?’ You said, ‘Please give me your order so that I can finish your enemies’. He said, ‘All right, go on’. You annihilated his enemies in no time and came back and bowed him again. He was so much impressed that he made you the King of Calcutta. How do you like this story ?”

“Really, the people of your country excel in the art of creating fantastic stories”, Charnock said.

“But you also now belong to this country. Do you think you will be able to return to your own country again ? Moreover, we are not going to allow you to leave this country”.

“Really Angela”, Charnock said, “I don’t like to return to my own country. I have spent the major part of my life in your country. The picture of my own country has become

hazy to me. I will be happy to spend the rest of my life in Calcutta. You will see Angela, my grave will be laid in the ground of this country."

"Don't say such inauspicious things. I am not going to see your grave. I have become widow once, and won't have that fate for the second time. This much I can say that I will die before you".

"But how shall I live without you, Angela. I felt aggrieved when Motia died. But truly speaking, that grief could not make me shaky. Motia became virtually dead to me from the day I got you. So, if I don't get you by my side in the last years of my life, my future will be extremely dark, my dearest heart".

"Then let us make an agreement to die together", Angela proposed jokingly Charnock remained silent.

Angela continued, "Today I have to divulge to you one thing which I have kept secret from you for a long time lest you are worried. Since I suffered illness at Hijili, I am not keeping good health at all. I have become weak, feel pain in my stomach, have no appetite and my head reels at the slightest strain. I have a feeling that I won't live long".

"Why didn't you tell me of this before?". Charnock was extremely upset. "I could have got you treated by the best surgeon of the Company at Madras".

"Your British doctor could not diagnose the disease of a Hindu woman. What do they know about the tropical diseases of this country?"

Then let me call in a Vaidya. Don't neglect your health so much, Angela. Your body does not belong to you alone, it is mine also. How can I get peace, if you are indisposed of? I am sending for the Vaidya right now".

Vaidya Chandrasekhar came and examined Mrs. Charnock with great care and attention. The liver had been enlarged and the heart was weak. He prescribed complete rest for Mrs. Charnock and prepared necessary medicines for her.

Inside the well-furnished cabin of a house-boat lay Mrs. Charnock on the bed. Charnock was relaxing by her side. His wrinkled face bore the mark of worries and anxieties.

No pucca house could be built till now. The majority of Charnock's people were living inside mud huts, tents and in the boats. It was also a problem to maintain peace and harmony in the new colony. There were only 150 mercenary soldiers under the command of Capt. Hill. Some of them again were Portuguese. Last but not the least, there was no cordial feelings among the British subjects. They were frequently at quarrels with each other.

A ship from Madras had brought the news that Mr. Trenchfield had filed a defamation suit against Charnock. The comments made by Charnock against him to the Directors had provided the source of defamation. Was this the prelude to Roger Bradyll's predictions?

Rumour was also rampant that a new company was in the making. Charnock's future in his old age was thus uncertain. Still Charnock would not repent for any thing. He had become a fatalist after spending so many years in Hindustan.

"What are you thinking so hard?", Mrs. Charnock asked.



“So many things”, he said.

“Don’t think so much. Look at Sutanuti-Calcutta on the east bank of the river. Your dream is becoming a reality. One day I have made jokes with you regarding your plan for the new city. Now that city is going to take shape”.

“I have only laid the foundation of Sutanuti-Calcutta, but it would not be possible perhaps for me to build the city. I cherished great hopes that I would build such a city that would rival Madras one day. But that is now a freak of imagination. Can’t you see how many hurdles are there in front of me?”

“I am sure all these hurdles will be removed one day. Think of the days in Patna, Kasimbazar, Hooghly and Hijili. Those days cannot be compared with the present. Today you are Raja Charnock”.

“You are also mocking me, Angela?” The new company is in the offing. I don’t know what is my future”.

“Let me pray to God that I won’t be alive to see your bad days. I can well perceive that my days are coming to an end”.

“Will you stop such talks, Angela”, Charnock’s tone was pathetic.

“Hear me, please”, Mrs. Charnock appealed. “My last request to you. Do cremate my dead body on the banks of the Bhagirathi in Calcutta according to Hindu rites”.

“I rescued you one day from the funeral pyre. I can’t let your beauty burn into ashes in the fire, Angela”.

“No, no. You have to keep my last request. When my earthly body burns into ashes completely, my soul will mingle

with yours. Cremate my body on the banks of the Bhagirathi. Call the Brahmins and have my **sradh** ceremony performed by them”.

Job Charnock slowly began to caress the dark hairs of Angela.

Mrs. Charnock's premonition came to be true and she died one day unceremoniously. The dramatic sequence which marked her rescue from the funeral pyre was totally absent in her death-bed. She breathed her last after suffering from protracted illness in a most common homely environment.

A shadow of gloom overtook the whole colony. The flag was half-masted atop the factory. All men, womenfolk, servants and maid-servants wept bitterly. The courtyard was crowded with people from all walks of life. Capt. Hill, Charles Pale and even Roger Brady<sup>11</sup> came to offer their condolences. But Job Charnock sat still like a statue and continued to puff his hubble-bubble incessantly without saying anything to anybody.

Meanwhile, Capt. Dorrill had brought the most decorated coffin with heaps of garlands of white lotus and asked Charnock about the performance of the last rites.

Charnock simply ordered him to send for the Brahmins. “My wife would be cremated according to Hindu rites”, he said.

This sent ripples of commotion among the British circles. True, Mrs. Charnock was a Hindu woman, but she was the wife of a Christian. Why should she be cremated? The Chaplain came to Charnock to convince him of the logic of putting her body into the grave but instantly returned after getting a rebuff from him. But no Brahmins were available for the cremation of Mrs. Charnock. Somebody informed Charnock

that all the Brahmins of Sutanuti-Calcutta had gone underground for fear of committing an unconventional thing. Charnock became furious and battered the messenger with blows and kicks.

Everybody was terribly upset at the sudden change of Charnock's conduct. Mrs. Hill prudently sent Catherine, Charnock's youngest daughter, to her father. She jumped into Charnock's lap and began to weep. Charnock now burst into tears. Embracing his daughter, he wept bitterly.

At last Mrs. Charnock's body was sent to the grave. The road from Baitakkhana coming towards west had ended into a big pond. Mrs. Charnock's grave was dug on the south-west corner of this pond. The soldiers played mournful tunes. A long condolence procession, comprising people from all religions, accompanied the coffin. It seemed as if the whole of Sutanuti-Calcutta had converged near the graveyard to mourn the loss of Mrs. Charnock.

The grave was filled with earth. This time Sundar Kahar brought a cock and handed it over to Charnock. Charnock surprised everybody present there by sacrificing the cock on the grave.

The chaplain was annoyed at such paganism on the part of the British Chief in Calcutta. But nobody dared to protest against the action of a grief-stricken Agent.

\* \* \*

Charnock's character underwent a radical change. He had lost the equilibrium of his life. Whole day and night he used to sit with a grave face, keeping himself completely aloof from the work of the Council.

His temper became so irritating during these days that even his daughters did not dare to come near him. Mary once asked Charnock to arrange for the marriage of Elizabeth. But Charnock was enraged. "I am not going to be bothered with this. Do whatever you think best", he shouted.

Only Sundar Kahar was allowed to stay near him. He was Charnock's silent companion.

In this way a full year passed by after the death of Mrs. Charnock. The priests prayed in the church, but Job Charnock accompanied by Sundar Kahar, went to the grave and sacrificed a cock on it.

Charnock's health broke down completely due to his irregular habits. Sundar Kahar one day requested Charnock to take care of his health and stop drinking. Job Charnock rebuked him and turned him out of his room.

\* \* \*

The Christmas of 1692 was approaching, but here was no move to celebrate the festival in the new colony. Agent Job Charnock was seriously ill and bed-ridden. Capt. Dorrill got him examined by the doctor, who could not utter any word of assurance. Excessive drinking had damaged the liver and the heart was also weak.

The doctor prescribed medicines but Charnock threw them away and shouted for punch. Wine was prohibited by the doctor. Job Charnock abused the doctor in a filthy language.

The doctor said sternly, "Worshipful Mr. Charnock, your days are numbered. It is not even a matter of days but only a matter of hours. If you want, you can order your own coffin and ask your people to get the epitaph for the grave written.

Job Charnock softened his tone suddenly and thanked the doctor. "Doctor, you are an angel. I fell greatly relieved by your verdict".

"I can understand clearly that you are committing suicide", the doctor said.

"No, no. I am embracing my salvation. I have fought enough. Now there is lasting peace before me. Where is Eyre?"

Charles Eyre appeared before him.

"My boy, my dear boy, my loving son", Charnock said, "place the order for my epitaph. Write simply 'Job' on the the epitaph. I came to Hindustan, accepting a job from the Right Honourable Company. Let that introduction of mine remain on my grave".

"But Sir," "Eyre said, you are the founder of Calcutta, the father of Calcutta. I can swear that I will build a gigantic memorial on your grave".

"No, no, my dear boy, don't spend so much money on this shattered body of mine. Only place my coffin by the side of my dearest wife".

Job Charnock sank into a semi-conscious state.

In his last days, Job Charnock did not allow the doctor, relations and even his daughters to come by his bed-side. Only Sundar Kahar used to sit near his feet like a statue.

Capt. Dorrill one day forced his entry into the patient's room and after taking his seat in a chair, said: "Worshipful Sir, it is a matter of great sorrow for us that you are taking your last leave from us. But who is going to replace you? Who is there to undertake your work? We want your directives".

"What directive can I give you", Charnock said faintly.  
"The God above can only give such a directive".

"Still tell me Sir, whom do you think fit for your work ?"

"Baird, Stanley, Ellis or Bradyll. Yes Bradyll would be the best person".

"What are you saying, Sir ? Have you forgotten that Bradyll once insulted you ?" Capt, Dorrill asked surprisingly.

"No, no, he is a smart and shrewd chap. Above all, he had the guts to speak unpleasant things on my face. A brave man like him is required".

"But what about your son-in-law, Eyre ? Don't you consider him to be a suitable successor to you ?"

"Eyre is a bright good boy. I love him very dearly", Charnock said. "But he is unfit to bear the responsibility of this Calcutta, Captain. I prefer a bold, shrewd, stern man who can build this city. I could not do it".

"You are the founder of Calcutta, father of Calcutta. Isn't it that you had to fight both inside and outside to establish our rights in Calcutta ?"

"I am the father of Calcutta, Raja of Calcutta," Charnock said in a mocking tone. "No, I don't want anything from Calcutta except a little place of land by the side of my dearest wife's grave. My grave will be laid there. I want only this place of land on eternal lease. Captain, won't Calcutta give this bit of land to me".

"What are you saying, Sir. The whole of Calcutta is for you".

Job Charnock did not say a word any more and was again engulfed in drowsiness.

The Christmas came and went and the first morning of 1693 dawned, but the struggle between Job Charnock's life and death continued unabated.

January 10, 1693

"Give me punch, give me punch", Job Charnock suddenly shouted. Nobody appeared with the jar of punch since it was prohibited by the doctor.

Job Charnock's shout began to grow in intensity. He tried to get up from his bed in an effort to bring the jar of punch himself but fell down beside his bed. He began to cry aloud like a child.

"These people won't let me die in peace. They want me to die of thirst. Punch, a peg of punch . . ."

Suddenly Sundar Kahar appeared on the scene with a jar of punch and placed it in the shaky hand of Charnock.

A smile of gratitude flashed on the lips of Charnock. He raised the jar to his mouth and tried to pour its contents down his throat but collapsed into death.

Thus came to an end the adventurous and eventful life of Job Charnock, the founder of the biggest metropolis in India.

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## LILA AND CHARNOCK

( A short story by Subodh Ghosh )

Long, long ago, a golden-haired handsome youth from a far-off island country gazed at a woman of a new continent with undisguised astonishment.

The time was about three centuries ago, when Aurgangzebe's much vaunted Moghul Empire was showing signs of disintegration and it was when the activities of British merchant ships and warships had accelerated at the mouth of the Bay of Bengal.

The foreigner was Job Charnock, who, at a later date, laid the foundation of the British Empire in India at a tiny village, then known as Sutanuti, on the east coast of the Hooghly river. Later, this village, along with two others on the same coast, developed into the second largest city of the British Empire.

The place where Charnock saw this girl was, of course, not Sutanuti, but hundreds of miles north of this village where he had established the second factory of the East India Company. British trade in muslin and spices had been flourishing then at this place.

Charnock was simply infatuated by the exquisite physical charms of that girl. Her tall and graceful figure, deep black eyes, exceedingly fair complexion with a crimson tint, slender waist, thick black curly hair, all made a lasting impression on him.

On that particular day, a festival was being celebrated by the local people. To mark this festival, a fair was being held in a field near the riverside. Charnock came to see this girl who had



apparently also the same purpose. The girl was Lila, daughter of a local Brahmin landlord.

The deep red vermilion mark across the head of that girl did not escape the notice of Charnock and he instantly felt that looking at this girl with some desire meant like longing for a distant star.

The girl, aware of Charnock's intent attention towards her, blushed and lowered her sight. Charnock seemed to drink her blushing beauty.

Lila, too, felt a great attraction for this handsome foreigner but at once realised her helplessness, being a married woman. After returning home, she wept bitterly. She recalled that she was married to a Brahmin at the age of three, 20 years ago. The Brahmin had been her father's guest for a few days on his way to Varanasi. Immediately after the marriage, her husband left for Varanasi and settled there. Lila had never seen him again since then.

Charnock could not forget the deep black eyes of that girl and her blushing beauty in his day-to-day trading life.

One day, tired of the haunting memory of that girl, Charnock went to the riverside bathing **ghat** in the morning and got the most pleasant surprise of his life. He saw the girl coming out of a palanquin to take a dip into the holy river. This time the lady not only obliged him with a glance but also greeted him with a faint smile. After taking her bath, she left the **ghat** in her palanquin.

From this day onwards, Charnock never missed his morning stroll on the riverside in spite of his multifarious preoccupations to have a sight of his dream girl. This became a daily feature in

Lila and Charnock's life to meet each other without exchanging a word.

A full year passed by in this way when one day there was a break in this routine but pleasant affair. No palanquin arrived on that day and Charnock noticed that a funeral pyre was being arranged at a little distance away from the bathing **ghat**. The priest, the drummers and some local people had assembled near the pyre.

On making an enquiry, Charnock came to know that a woman was going to commit **sati** by burning herself alive in the pyre as her husband had expired.

Suddenly the place became alive with loud chanting of **mantras** by priests and beating of drums. A lady was slowly approaching the pyre. To his agonising surprise, Charnock noticed that she was no other than her dream girl, Lila.

A relation of Lila had come from Varanasi conveying the message that her husband had died recently. He had also brought with him a pair of the deceased's wooden sandals so that Lila could burn herself in the pyre along with the wooden slippers as a substitute for the physical body of her late husband.

Lila cast a mournful glance at Charnock and was preparing herself to leap into the fire. Charnock's eyes became filled with tears. Suddenly Charnock heard the shrieking of the priest. Lila had refused to become a **sati**.

"Why ?", asked the priest.

"I don't know my husband. I cannot recollect having seen him. I am not devoted to my husband", retorted Lila.

"But that does not interfere in any way with your becoming a **sati**, the priest said. "Sacrifice yourself and that will be a testimony to your devotion".

"I am attached to another person. I have no right to become a **sati**," Lila exclaimed boldly.

An evil woman, a characterless woman, shouted the crowd.

Lila was now stepping back from the pyre and began walking aimlessly along the river bank.

A few furlongs away, another group of people was patiently awaiting with some design. They were traders in immoral traffic and would get hold of any woman who would refuse to become a **sati** as on this occasion. They were about to pounce upon Lila like vultures when a terrific roar was heard.

Like an infuriated lion, Charnock jumped upon them with a naked sword and the cowards melted away forthwith in terror.

Charnock lost no time in lifting her up in his strong arms and he dashed for a boat belonging to the East India Company, which lay anchored nearby. On entering the boat, he ordered the crew to sail immediately towards the south.

Inside the cabin of the boat lay Lila with a bunch of lily flowers presented to her by Charnock. Outside the cabin on the deck sat Charnock, thousands of thoughts flashing over his mind.

At last one evening, the boat reached the **ghat** of Sutanuti. Charnock and Lila came out and stood before the gate of the factory built by Charnock previously.

"This is your shelter, Lila", Charnock said and left for his apartment.

After spending some lonely days and nights in this house, Lila sorrowfully felt one day that she had only been given a

shelter in this house but she was not a sheltered woman in Charnock's life. Every day a bunch of white lily flowers was sent to her as a token of Charnock's love and affection, but Charnock himself did not come to her.

Weary of this solitary and monotonous life, one afternoon Lila was slowly approaching a big pond in the compound of the factory to commit suicide.

At that very moment, somebody caught hold of her hand from behind.

Lila was taken aback. "You?"

"Yes, it is me", Charnock smiled.

"But how long?", Lila asked.

"Forever", Charnock replied.

Lila became silent.

"Not only in this life, but even after death I will remain with you, Lila", Charnock said lovingly.

This was not a false assurance. Charnock accepted Lila as his legally married wife and their love and attachment to each other had become legendary in those days. Even after death, they have remained side by side with each other.

The two graves of Charnock and Lila in the cool interior of a memorial in the courtyard of St. John's Church bear sweet testimony to a strange but true love between a man of a remote island and a woman of this Gangetic coast.



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## ERRATA

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	
xii	Penultimate	<i>Delete</i> coma
1	10 ( Italics )	<i>Read</i> has <i>after</i> It
3	25	„ Secondly
4	27	<i>Add</i> a stop after theologian
5	23	<i>Read</i> Shah
10	2	<i>Insert</i> August in the blank
„	„	<i>Read</i> Charnock
„	15	„ People
14	17	„ short
15	2	„ falling
22	20	„ the
23	4	„ with
28	25	„ Alexander
30	23	„ Perhaps
39	1	„ birth and <i>add</i> ‘a’ after ‘to’
„	21	„ traces
41	8 (Ref. 1)	„ for
„	9 (Ref.)	<i>Add</i> ‘to’ before ‘be’
43	7	<i>Unbracket</i> 1974
44	9	<i>Read</i> Londoners
45	Penultimate	„ Agent
46	3	„ several
..	last	„ traced



<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	
47	Ref. 23	<i>Add a coma after BRITANNICA</i>
49	last	<i>Read Mookerji</i>
53	10	„ OF
„	Ref. 74	„ Letters
55	9	„ forcibly
„	14	<i>Unquote privileges</i>
„	Ref. 88	<i>Read JOB CHARNOCKER BIBI</i>
„	Ref. 89	„ KIMBADANTIR
56	Ref. 97	„ Rezabeebah
65	21	„ triumph
67	Penultimate	„ decision
68	14	„ burial
70	22	„ correspondency
71	15	<i>Treat coma at the end of the line as stop</i>
„	30	<i>Read just</i>
„	last	„ of
72	8	<i>Delete coma after 'Bengal'</i>
75	10	<i>Read cularly</i>
„	13	„ sailed
„	15	„ vessel
76	5	<i>Delete 'in' and read Leslie</i>
77	Penultimate	<i>Read captured</i>
78	19	„ Epidemicall
81	24	„ necessary

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	
85	10	<i>Read</i> wild
90	5	„ little
93	12	<i>Add</i> a stop <i>after</i> wounded
95	2	<i>Read</i> to
„	25	„ be
98	16	„ weak
100	3	<i>Unquote</i> itself
101	29	<i>Delete</i> and
103	23	<i>Read</i> momentary
108	Penultimate	„ Old
110	19	<i>Space</i> between ‘dirty’ and ‘straggling’
111	7	<i>Read</i> bushy
„	8	„ moustaches
„	21	„ Barrackpore
113	12	„ Chuttanutty
114	6	„ circumstances
116	5	„ Lieutenant
117	6	<i>Add</i> ‘as’ between ‘sense’ and ‘an’
118	7	<i>Read</i> I and <i>delete</i> t
„	12	„ Civic
122	9	„ Settlement
„	16	„ the
„	25 ( Note )	„ History
123	3	<i>Treat</i> ™the stop after ‘ornaments’ <i>as</i> coma

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	
123	9	<i>Read</i> bore
124	7	„ sensation
126	8	<i>Space</i> the words ‘andby’ and ‘thatplace’
127	17	<i>Read</i> credited
129	2	„ emperor’s
„	29	„ qualified
130	12	„ capricious
„	14	„ Goldsborough
„	23 (note)	„ official
131	2	<i>Unbracket</i> ‘pyre’
„	5	<i>Read</i> poison
133	16	<i>Delete</i> one ‘the’
134	4 (poem)	<i>Read</i> widow
„	13	<i>Treat</i> semicolon after Calcutta <i>as</i> coma
136	12	<i>Read</i> acclamations
137	4	„ tittle-tattle
„	10	„ right
„	12	„ scandal
138	15	„ pilot
139	1	<i>Delete</i> quote marks <i>before</i> Charnock
„	7	<i>Treat</i> stop <i>as</i> coma
141	Penultimate	<i>Read</i> William
143	5	„ market
144	20	„ Charnock
145	10	„ fortifications

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	
145	14	<i>Read in</i>
146	Penultimate	„ doubtless
147	16	„ palaces
„	18	„ palaces
150	6	„ and
„	15	„ Ellis
152	1	<i>Delete bracket</i>
153	16	<i>Read Stephen</i>
154	8	„ money
„	25	„ bequeathed
155	9	„ sonnes
„	24	„ executor
„	25	„ family
„	Penultimate	„ county
156	4	„ The
„	7	„ Penwortham
„	10	„ ‘both’ and <i>treat</i> the stop <i>as</i> coma after ‘century’
„	12	<i>Read Bedford</i>
165	24	<i>Space words ‘finallanding’</i>
166	8	<i>Treat coma after doubt as stop</i>
167	24	<i>Add “also will, at our own charge, cause a convenient Church to be built, of timber” after ‘we’, before the bracket.</i>
„	last	<i>Insert allow between ‘also’ and ‘fifty’</i>
168	2	<i>Read choose</i>

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	
168	3	<i>Read</i> 1688
„	8	„ 1630
„	13	„ At
176	9	<i>Add</i> a coma after 'borough'
179	17	<i>Read</i> morning
182	12	„ crystalline
183	26	„ magnesium
184	9	„ crystalline
194	14	„ thick
196	7 (Stanza I)	„ silt
203	2 (Stanza V)	„ exquisite
205	1 (Stanza XV)	„ Betrothed
	5 (Stanza XIX)	„ willing
207	7 (Note I)	<i>Treat</i> coma after E as stop
211	1 (Note)	<i>Read</i> Free
212	8	<i>Add</i> a stop after you
214	4	<i>Read</i> commission
215	26	„ she
228	6	„ problems
229	12	„ bungalow
„	19	„ Elliot
230	5	„ exempted
„	last	<i>Add</i> 'not' after Motia
231	5	<i>Read</i> But

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	
232	4	<i>Read</i> your
„	21	„ suitable
233	11	„ family
„	27	„ purchased
„	28	„ shellac
238	24	„ immediately
239	16	<i>Add</i> be <i>after</i> ‘will’
240	25	<i>Read</i> Ann
„	29	<i>Add</i> family <i>after</i> ‘his’
241	11	<i>Read</i> that
242	27	„ leadership
245	10	„ therefore
251	1	„ Captain
„	18	„ goddess
252	12	„ from
253	12	„ predicament
254	4	„ British
255	21	„ interloper
256	23	<i>Treat</i> stop <i>after</i> ‘nine’ <i>as</i> hyphen
257	1	<i>Invert</i> the quotes
„	17	<i>Read</i> persistent
259	21	„ the
260	5	<i>Add</i> a stop <i>after</i> Court
263	25	<i>Read</i> quarrelling
„	last	„ letter

( vili )

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	
266	12	<i>Read</i> Madopollam
	20	„ undaunted
267	5	„ Sundar
268	5	„ herself
370	10	„ Baitakkhana
274	15	<i>Delete</i> quotes <i>after</i> Angela
277	16	<i>Read</i> there
„	last	<i>Unquote</i> the sentence
278	2	<i>Read</i> feel
„	14	<i>Transfer</i> the quotes from Eyre <i>to</i> you
279	22	<i>Rcad</i> piece
„	24	„ piece
282	18	„ girl







